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THE BEQUEST OF

CHARLES SUMNER, LL. D.,

OF BOSTON,

(Class of 1830).

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Received 28 April, 1874.

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THE Works OF Horace.

Translated by Philip Francis, D.D.

LONDON.

Published by J. Walker, Paternoster Row: and J. Harris, St. Pauls Church Yard.

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THE

WORKS OF HORACE,

Q. Horatius Flaccus, Quintus

TRANSLATED

BY PHILIP FRANCIS, D.D.

To which is prefixed,

THE LIFE OF THE TRANSLATOR.

LONDON:

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1874, April 28.
Bequest of
Mr. Charles Sumner
of Boston,
(Feb. 1, 1831.)

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THE

LIFE OF THE TRANSLATOR,

THE REV. PHILIP FRANCIS.

FEW memoirs have been handed down to us of the able translator of Horace and Demosthenes. He was of Irish extraction, if not born in that kingdom; where his father was a dignified clergyman, and, among other preferments, held the rectory of St. Mary Dublin, from which he was ejected by the court on account of his Tory principles. His son, our author, was also educated for the church, and obtained a doctor's degree. His edition of Horace made his name known in England about the year 1743, and raised him a reputation, as a classical editor and translator, which no subsequent attempts have been able to diminish. Dr. Johnson, many years after other rivals had started, gave him this praise: "The lyrical part of Horace never can be properly translated; so much of the excellence is in the numbers and the expression. Francis has done it the best: I'll take his, five out of six, against them all."

Some time after the publication of Horace, he appears to have come over to England; where, in 1753, he published a translation of part of the Orations of Demosthenes, intending to comprise the whole in two quarto volumes. It was a matter of some importance at that time to publish a large work of this kind, and the author had the precaution therefore to secure a copious list of subscribers. Unfortunately,

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however, it had to contend with the acknowledged merit of Leland's Translation; and, allowing their respective merits to have been nearly equal, Leland's had at least the priority in point of time, and, upon comparison, was preferred by the critics, as being more free and eloquent, and less literally exact. This, however, did not arise from any defect in our author's skill, but was merely an error, if an error at all, in judgment: for he conceived that as few liberties as possible ought to be taken with the style of his author, and that there was an essential difference between a literal translation, which only he considered as faithful, and an imitation, in which we can never be certain that we have the author's words or precise meaning. In the year 1755, he completed his purpose in a second volume, which was applauded as a difficult work well executed, and acceptable to every friend of genius and literature: but its success was by no means correspondent to the wishes of the author or of his friends.

The year before the first volume of his Demosthenes appeared, he determined to attempt the drama, and his first essay was a tragedy, entitled Eugenia. This is professedly an adaptation of the French Genie to English feelings and habits, but it had not much success on the stage. Lord Chesterfield, in one of his letters to his son, observes, that he did not think it would have succeeded so well, considering how long our British audiences had been accustomed to murder, racks, and poison, in every tragedy: yet it affected the heart so much, that it triumphed over habit and prejudice. In a subsequent letter, he says that the boxes were crowded till the sixth night, when the pit and gallery were totally deserted, and it was dropped. Distress without death, he repeats, was not sufficient to affect a true British audience, so long accustomed to daggers, racks, and bowls of poison; contrary to Horace's rule, they desire to see Medea murder her children on the stage. The sentiments were too delicate to move them: and their hearts were to be taken by storm, not by parley.

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In 1754, Mr. Francis brought out another tragedy at Covent-Garden theatre, entitled Constantine, which was equally unsuccessful, but appears to have suffered principally by the improper distribution of the parts among the actors. This he alludes to, in the dedication to lord Chesterfield, with whom he appears to have been acquainted; and intimates, at the same time, that these disappointments had induced him to take leave of the stage.

During the political contests at the beginning of the present reign, he employed his pen in defence of government, and acquired the patronage of lord Holland; who rewarded his services by the rectory of Barrow in Suffolk, and the chaplainship of Chelsea-hospital. What were his publications on political topics, as they were anonymous, and probably dispersed among the periodical journals, cannot now be ascertained. They drew upon him, however, the wrath of Churchill, who in his "Author" has exhibited a portrait of Mr. Francis probably overcharged by spleen and envy. Churchill indeed was so profuse of his calumny, that, long before he died, his assertions had begun to lose their value. He is said to have intended to write a satirical poem, in which Francis was to make his appearance as the ordinary of Newgate. The severity of this satire was better understood at that time, when the ordinaries of Newgate were held in very little esteem, and some of them were grossly ignorant and dissolute.

Mr. Francis died at Bath, March 5, 1773, leaving a son, who in the same year was appointed one of the Supreme Council of Bengal, and is now sir Philip Francis, K. B., and M. P. for Appleby.

Of all the classical writers, Horace is by general consent allowed to be the most difficult to translate; yet so universal has been the ambition to perform this task, that scarcely an English poet can be named in whose works we do not find some part of Horace. These efforts, however, have not so frequently been directed to give the sense and local meaning of the author, as to transfuse his satire, and adapt it to modern persons and times. But of the few who have

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exhibited the whole of this interesting poet in an English dress, Mr. Francis has been supposed to have succeeded best in that which is most difficult, the lyric part, and likewise to have conveyed the spirit and sense of the original, in the Epistles and Satires, with least injury to the genius of the author. In his preface, he acknowledges his obligations to Dr. Dunkin, a poet of some celebrity, and an excellent classical scholar.

While Horace is accounted the most difficult, he is perhaps of all Latin authors the most popular; and accordingly we find more frequent quotations from him than from any other. He is in Latin what Pope is in English; and the reason is honourable to his talents, to the refinement and elegance of his sentiments, and to the universal range he took through the extensive provinces of manners, morals, and criticism. He was contemporary with Virgil and Varius, by whose means he obtained the patronage of Mæcenas and Augustus. To Mæcenas he was so warmly attached, that it has been supposed, but not on sufficient authority, that he put an end to his own life in order to follow his generous patron. It is certain that he died soon after Mæcenas, in the fifty-seventh year of his age, and in the year eighth before the Christian æra.

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PREFACE.

THE works of Horace have been always numbered among the most valuable remains of antiquity. If we may rely upon the judgment of his commentators, he has united in his lyric poetry the enthusiasm of Pindar, the majesty of Alcæus, the tenderness of Sappho, and the charming levities of Anacreon. Yet he has beauties of his own genius, his own manner, that form his peculiar character. Many of his odes are varied with irony and satire; with delicacy and humour; with ease and pleasantry. Some of them were written in the first heat of imagination, when circumstances of time, places, persons, were strong upon him. In others, he rises in full poetical dignity; sublime in sentiments, bold in allusions, and profuse of figures; frugal of words, curious in his choice, and happily venturous in his use of them; pure in his diction, animated in his expressions, and harmonious in his numbers; artful in the plans of his poems, regular in their conduct, and happy in their execution. Surely the best attempts to translate so various an author, will require great indulgence, and any tolerable success may deserve it. But perhaps we shall better see the variety of our poet's genius by considering, if such an expression may be forgiven, the various genius of lyric poetry.

In the first ages of Greece, the lyric muse was particularly appointed to celebrate the praises of the gods and heroes in their festivals. The noblest precepts of philosophy were enlivened by music, and animated by the language of poetry, while reason governed the raptures, which a religious enthusiasm inspired. We may therefore believe, that nothing

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could enter into its compositions, but what was chaste and correct, awful and sublime, while it was employed in singing the praises of gods, and immortalising the actions of men; in supporting the sacred truths of religion, and encouraging the practice of moral virtue. Such was its proper, natural character. But it soon lost this original excellence, and became debased to every light description of love, dances, feasts, gallantry, and wine. In this view it may be compared to one of its first masters, who descended (according to an expression of Quintilian) into sports and loves, although naturally formed for nobler subjects.

Yet this alteration, though it lessened its natural dignity, seems to have added to that pleasing variety, to which no other poetry can pretend. For when the skill and experience of the persons, who first cultivated the different kinds of poems, gave to each kind those numbers, which seemed most proper for it; as lyric poetry had given birth to all sorts of verse, so it preserved to itself all the measures of which they are composed, the pentameter alone excepted. Thus a variety of subjects is agreeably maintained by a variety of numbers, and they have both contributed to that free, unbounded spirit, which forms the peculiar character of lyric poetry.

In this freedom of spirit it disdains to mark the transitions, which preserve a connection in all other writings, and which naturally conduct the mind from one thought to another. From whence it must often happen, that while a translator is grammatically explaining his author, and opening his reasoning, that genius and manner, and boldness of thinking, which are effects of an immediate poetical enthusiasm, shall either be wholly lost, or greatly dissipated and enfeebled.

It is remarkable, that this kind of poetry was the first that appeared in Rome, as it was the first that was known in Greece, and was used in the same subjects by the Romans, while they had not yet any correspondence with Greece and her learning. How-

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-ever, it continued in almost its first rudeness until the Augustan age, when Horace, improved by reading and imitating the Grecian poets, carried it at once to its perfection, and, in the judgment of Quintilian, is almost the only Latin lyric poet worthy of being read.

If we should inquire into the state of lyric poetry among English writers, we shall be obliged to confess that their taste was early vitiated, and their judgment unhappily misguided, by the too great success of one man of wit, who first gave Pindar's name to a wild, irregular kind of versification, of which there is not one instance in Pindar. All his numbers are exact, and all his strophes regular. But from the authority of Cowley, supported by an inconsiderate imitation of some other eminent writers, every idler in poetry, who has not strength or industry sufficient to confine his rhimes and numbers to some constant form (which can alone give them real harmony), makes an art of wandering, and then calls his work a Pindaric ode; in which, by the same justness of criticism, his imagination is as wild and licentious as his numbers are loose and irregular.

To avoid this fault, all the measures in the following translation are constantly maintained through each ode, except in the Carmen Seculare. But it may be useless to excuse particulars, when possibly the whole poem, in its present form, may be condemned. Yet by foreigners it has been called Mr. Sanadon's master-piece; and since the odes of Horace are certainly not in that order at present, in which they were originally published, it has been esteemed an uncommon proof of his critical sagacity, to have reconciled in one whole so many broken parts, that have so long perplexed the best commentators. Yet the reader will find some alteration of Mr. Sanadon's plan, for which the translator is obliged to the learned and reverend Mr. Jones, who lately published a very valuable edition of Horace.

Although it was impossible to preserve our au-

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thor's measures, yet the form of his strophes has been often imitated, and, in general, there will be found a greater number of different stanzas, in the translation, than in the original. One advantage there is peculiar to English stanzas, that some of them have a natural ease and fluency; others seem formed for humour and pleasantry; while a third kind has a tone of dignity and solemnity proper for sublimer subjects. Thus the measures and form of the stanza will often show the design and cast of the ode.

In the translation it has not only been endeavoured to give the poet's general meaning, but to preserve that force of expression, in which his peculiar happiness consists, and that boldness of epithets, for which one of his commentators calls him wonderful, and almost divine. Many odes, especially in the first book, have little more than choice of words and harmony of numbers to make them not unworthy of their author; and although these were really the most difficult parts of the translation, yet they will be certainly least entertaining to an English reader. In the usual manner of paraphrase or imitation, it had not been impossible to have given them more spirit, according to the taste of many a modern critic, by enlarging the poet's design, and adding to his thoughts; but, however hardy the translator may seem by his present adventurous undertaking, this was a presumption, of which he was very little capable.

It would be a tedious, useless, and ill-natured labour to point out the faults in other versions of our poet. Let us rather acknowledge, that there are excellent lines in them, of which the present translator has taken as many as he could use upon his plan, and wishes, for the sake of the public, they could be found to exceed a hundred.

Yet still the far more valuable parts of our author remain to be considered. If in his Odes he appears with all the charms and graces and ornaments of poetry, in his Epistles and Satires he gives us the

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noblest precepts of philosophy, that ever formed the human heart, or improved the understanding. He tells us, that Homer shows in a clearer and more persuasive manner the beauty and advantages of virtue, the deformity and dangers of vice, than even the Stoic and Academician philosophers. Yet the morality of Homer is confined to politics; to the virtues or vices of princes, upon whom, indeed, the happiness or misery of their people depends. But in the morality of Horace, the happiness and misery of all human kind are interested. Here the gratitude and affection due to a good father for his care and tenderness are impressed upon the child. Here we are taught, that real greatness does not arise from the accident of being nobly born, or descended from a race of titled ancestors. We must imitate those virtues, to which they were indebted for their titles. Such are the sentiments of our poet's philosophy.

If his religion were a subject for our curiosity, it will appear to have been founded upon the best reasoning of the human understanding. He asserts a supreme Being, with that noble idea of him, "Unde nil majus generatur ipso, nec viget quicquam simile aut secundum." From this Being all others, both gods and men, received their existence, and upon him they depend for the continuance of it. But as creeds and practice too frequently differ, it is acknowledged, that our poet, although not professedly the disciple of any particular school, in general lived an Epicurean. Such a religion was happily suited to the natural indolence of his disposition, the carelessness of his temper, and the companionable gaiety of his humour. Yet we find him honest, just, humane, and good-natured; firm in his friendships; grateful, without flattery, to the bounty of Mæcenas, and wisely contented with the fortune which he had the honour of receiving from his illustrious patron. Among the numerous authors of antiquity, others, perhaps, may be more admired, or esteemed; none more amiable, more worthy to be beloved.

The difficulty of translating this part of his works

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arises in general from the frequent translations of lines in Grecian writers, and parodies on those of his contemporaries; from his introducing new characters on the scene, and changing the speakers of his dialogues; from his not marking his transitions from thought to thought, but giving them as they lay in his mind. These unconnected transitions are of great life and spirit; nor should a translator be too coldly regular in supplying the connection, since it will be a tame performance, that gives us the sense of Horace, if it be not given in his peculiar manner.

As his editors have often perplexed the text, by altering the measures of our author for the sake of a more musical cadence; so they, who have imitated or translated him with most success in English, seem to have forgotten, that a carelessness of numbers is a peculiar part of his character, which ought to be preserved almost as faithfully as his sentiments.

Style is genius, and justly numbered amongst the fountains of the sublime. Expression in poetry is that colouring in painting, which distinguishes a master's hand. But the misfortune of our translators is, that they have only one style; and consequently all their authors, Homer, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, are compelled to speak in the same numbers, and the same unvaried expression. The free-born spirit of poetry is confined in twenty constant syllables, and the sense regularly ends with every second line, as if the writer had not strength enough to support himself, or courage enough to venture into a third.

This unclassical kind of versification would be particularly most unnatural in a translation of Horace. It would make him argue in couplets, and the persons of his dialogues converse almost in epigrams. The translator has therefore followed the sense in one unbroken period. He has often endeavoured to imitate the prosaic cadence of his author, when he could with much more ease have made him appear like a modern original. He has run the lines into

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each other, as he believes it the best manner of preserving that loose, prosaic poetry, that negligence of numbers, which has ever been esteemed one of his peculiar beauties.

If we consider the poetical spirit and numerous variety of measures in his Odes, we may believe this careless versification in his Satires was not an effect of necessity, but of judgment. His frequent use of proverbs and common phrases; his different manner of expressing the same sentiments in his Odes and Satires, will convince us, that he really thought a satirist and a poet were extremely different characters; that the language of poetry was as unnatural to the morality of satire, as a low, familiar style to the majesty of an epic poem; or, as he himself expresses it, that the Muse of Satire walks on foot, while all her sisters soar into the skies.

If this criticism be just, the dispute between Juvenal and Horace, with regard to style, may with ease be decided. In Juvenal the vices of his age are shown in all their natural horrors. He commands his readers in the language of authority, and terrifies them with images drawn in the boldness of a truly poetical spirit. He stands like a priest at an altar sacrificing to his gods; but even a priest, in his warmest zeal of religion, might be forgiven, if he confessed so much humanity, as not to take pleasure in hearing the groans, and searching into the entrails of the victim.

There is a kind of satire of such malignity, as too surely proceeds from a desire of gratifying a constitutional cruelty of temper. The satirist does not appear like a magistrate to give sentence on the vices of mankind, but like an executioner to slaughter the criminal. It was the saying of a great man, that he who hated vice, hated mankind; but certainly he does not love them as he ought, who indulges his natural sagacity in a discernment of their faults, and feels an ill-natured pleasure in exposing them to public view.

Our author was of another spirit; of a natural

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cheerfulness of temper; an easiness of manners, fashioned by the politeness of courts; a good understanding, improved by conversing with mankind; a quick discernment of their frailties, but, in general, so happy an art of correcting them, that he reproves without offending, and instructs without an affectation of superiority. He preserves a strength of reasoning necessary to persuade, without that dogmatical seriousness, which is apt to disgust or disoblige. He has this advantage over the rigid satirist, that we receive him into our bosoms, while he reasons with good-humour, and corrects in the language of friendship. Nor will his Satires be less useful to the present age, than to that in which they were written, since he does not draw his characters from particular persons, but from human nature itself, which is invariably the same in all ages and countries.

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ODES.

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ODES.

BOOK I.

ODE I.

TO MÆCENAS.

MÆCENAS, whose high lineage springs
From fair Etruria's ancient kings,
O thou, my patron and my friend,
On whom my life, my fame depend;
In clouds th' Olympic dust to roll,
To turn with kindling wheels the goal,
And gain the palm, victorious prize!
Exalt a mortal to the skies.
This man, by faction and debate
Rais'd to the first employs of state;
Another, who from Libya's plain
Sweeps to his barn the various grain;
A third, who with unwearied toil
Ploughs cheerful his paternal soil;
While in their several wishes blest,
Not all the wealth by kings possest,
Shall tempt, with fearful souls, to brave
The terrors of the foamy wave.
When loud the winds and waters wage
Wild war with elemental rage,
The merchant praises the retreat,
The quiet of his rural seat;
Yet, want untutor'd to sustain,
Soon rigs his shatter'd bark again.
No mean delights possess his soul,
With good old wine who crowns his bowl;

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Whose early revels are begun
Ere half the course of day be run;
Now, by some sacred fountain laid,
Now, stretch'd beneath some bowering shade.
  The tented camps a soldier charm,
Trumpets and fifes his bosom warm;
Their mingled sounds with joy he'll hear,
Those sounds of war, which mothers fear.
  The sportsman, chill'd by midnight Jove,
Forgets his tender, wedded love,
Whether his faithful hounds pursue,
And hold the bounding hind in view;
Whether the boar his hunters foils,
And foaming breaks the spreading toils.
  An ivy-wreath, fair Learning's prize,
Raises Mæcenas to the skies.
The breezy grove, the mazy round,
Where the light Nymphs and Satyrs bound,
If there the sacred Nine inspire
The breathing flute, and strike the lyre,
There let me fix my last retreat,
Far from the little vulgar, and the great.
But if you rank me with the choir,
Who tun'd with art the Grecian lyre,
Swift to the noblest heights of fame
Shall rise thy poet's deathless name.

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ODE II.

TO AUGUSTUS.

ENOUGH of snow and hail in tempests dire
Have pour'd on earth, while Heav'n's eternal Sire
With red right arm at his own temples hurl'd
His thunders, and alarm'd a guilty world,
Lest Pyrrha should again with plaintive cries
Behold the monsters of the deep arise,
When to the mountain-summit Proteus drove
His sea-born herd, and where the woodland dove
Late perch'd, his wonted seat, the scaly brood
Entangled hung upon the topmost wood,
And every timorous native of the plain
High-floating swam amid the boundless main.
We saw, push'd backward to his native source,
The yellow Tiber roll his rapid course,
With impious ruin threat'ning Vesta's fane,
And the great monuments of Numa's reign;
With grief and rage while Ilia's bosom glows,
Boastful, for her revenge, his waters rose:
But now, th' uxorious river glides away,
So Jove commands, smooth-winding to the sea.
And yet, less numerous by their parents' crimes,
Our sons shall hear, shall hear to latest times,
Of Roman arms with civil gore embru'd,
Which better had the Persian foe subdu'd.
Among her guardian gods, what pitying power
To raise her sinking state shall Rome implore?
Shall her own hallow'd virgins' earnest prayer
Harmonious charm offended Vesta's ear?
To whom shall Jove assign to purge away
The guilty deed? Come then, bright god of day,
But gracious veil thy shoulders beamy-bright,
Oh! veil in clouds th' unsufferable light.

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Or come, sweet queen of smiles, while round thee
rove,
On wanton wing, the powers of mirth and love;
Or hither, Mars, thine aspect gracious bend,
And powerful thy neglected race defend;
Parent of Rome, amidst the rage of fight
Sated with scenes of blood, thy fierce delight,
Thou, whom the polish'd helm, the noise of arms,
And the stern soldier's frown with transport warms,
Or thou, fair Maia's winged son, appear,
And human shape, in prime of manhood, wear;
Declar'd the guardian of th' imperial state,
Divine avenger of great Cæsar's fate:
Oh! late return to heav'n, and may thy reign
With lengthen'd blessings fill thy wide domain;
Nor let thy people's crimes provoke thy flight,
On air swift-rising to the realms of light.
Great prince and father of the state, receive
The noblest triumphs which thy Rome can give;
Nor let the Parthian, with unpunish'd pride,
Beyond his bounds, O Cæsar, dare to ride.

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ODE III.

TO THE SHIP IN WHICH VIRGIL SAILED TO ATHENS.

SO may the Cyprian queen divine
And the twin-stars with saving lustre shine;
So may the father of the wind
All others, but the western breezes, bind,
As you, dear vessel, safe restore
Th' entrusted pledge to th' Athenian shore,
And of my soul the partner save,
My much-lov'd Virgil, from the raging wave.
Or oak, or brass, with triple fold,
Around that daring mortal's bosom roll'd,
Who first to the wild ocean's rage
Launch'd the frail bark, and heard the winds engage
Tempestuous, when the South descends
Precipitate, and with the North contends;
Nor fear'd the stars portending rain,
Nor the loud tyrant of the western main,
Of power supreme the storm to raise,
Or calmer smooth the surface of the seas.
What various forms of death could fright
The man, who view'd with fix'd, unshaken sight,
The floating monsters, waves inflam'd,
And rocks for shipwreck'd fleets ill-fam'd?
Jove has the realms of earth in vain
Divided by th' inhabitable main,
If ships profane, with fearless pride,
Bound o'er th' inviolable tide.
No laws, or human or divine,
Can the presumptuous race of man confine.
Thus, from the sun's ethereal beam
When bold Prometheus stole th' enlivening flame,
Of fevers dire a ghastly brood,
Till then unknown, th' unhappy fraud pursu'd;

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On earth their horrors baleful spread,
And the pale monarch of the dead,
Till then slow-moving to his prey,
Precipitately rapid swept his way.
Thus did the venturous Cretan dare
To tempt, with impious wings, the void of air;
Through hell Alcides urg'd his course:
No work too high for man's audacious force.
Our folly would attempt the skies,
And with gigantic boldness impious rise;
Nor Jove, provok'd by mortal pride,
Can lay his angry thunderbolts aside.

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ODE IV.

TO SESTIUS.

FIERCE winter melts in vernal gales,
And grateful zephyrs fill the spreading sails;
No more the ploughman loves his fire,
No more the lowing herds their stalls desire,
While earth her richest verdure yields,
Nor hoary frosts now whiten o'er the fields.
Now joyous through the verdant meads,
Beneath the rising moon, fair Venus leads
Her various dance, and with her train
Of Nymphs and modest Graces shakes the plain,
While Vulcan's glowing breath inspires
The toilsome forge, and blows up all its fires.
Now crown'd with myrtle, or the flowers
Which the glad earth from her free bosom pours,
We'll offer, in the shady grove,
Or lamb, or kid, as Pan shall best approve.
With equal pace impartial Fate
Knocks at the palace as the cottage gate;
Nor should our sum of life extend
Our growing hopes beyond their destin'd end.
When sunk to Pluto's shadowy coasts,
Opprest with darkness and the fabled ghosts,
No more the dice shall there assign
To thee the jovial monarchy of wine.
No more shall you the fair admire,
The virgins' envy, and the youth's desire.

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ODE V.

TO PYRRHA.

WHILE liquid odours round him breathe,
What youth, the rosy bower beneath,
Now courts thee to be kind?
Pyrrha, for whose unwary heart
Do you, thus drest with careless art,
Your yellow tresses bind?

How often shall th' unpractis'd youth
Of alter'd gods, and injur'd truth,
With tears, alas! complain?
How soon behold with wondering eyes
The black'ning winds tempestuous rise,
And scowl along the main?

While, by his easy faith betray'd,
He now enjoys thee, golden maid,
Thus amiable and kind;
He fondly hopes that you shall prove
Thus ever vacant to his love,
Nor heeds the faithless wind.

Unhappy they, to whom, untried,
You shine, alas! in beauty's pride;
While I, now safe on shore,
Will consecrate the pictur'd storm,
And all my grateful vows perform
To Neptune's saving power.

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ODE VI.

TO AGRIPPA.

VARIUS, who soars on Homer's wing,
Agrippa, shall thy conquests sing,
Whate'er, inspir'd by his command,
The soldier dar'd on sea or land.
But we nor tempt with feeble art
Achilles' unrelenting heart,
Nor sage Ulysses in our lays
Pursues his wanderings through the seas;
Nor oura in tragic strains to tell
How Pelops' cruel offspring fell.
The Muse, who rules th' unwarlike lyre,
Forbids me boldly to aspire
To thine or sacred Cæsar's fame,
And hurt with feeble song the theme.
Who can describe the god of fight
In adamantine armour bright;
Or Merion on the Trojan shore
With dust, how glorious! cover'd o'er;
Or Diomed, by Pallas' aid,
To warring gods an equal made?
But whether loving, whether free,
With all our usual levity,
Untaught to strike the martial string,
Of feasts and virgin fights we sing;
Of maids, who, when bold love assails,
Fierce in their anger—pare their nails.

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ODE VII.

TO MUNATIUS PLANCUS.

LET other poets in harmonious lays
Immortal Rhodes or Mitylene praise,
Or Ephesus, or Corinth's towery pride,
Girt by the rolling main on either side;
Or Thebes, or Delphos, for their gods renown'd,
Or Tempe's plains with flowery honours crown'd.
There are, who sing in everlasting strains
The towers where wisdom's virgin-goddess reigns,
And ceaseless toiling court the trite reward
Of olive, pluck'd by every vulgar bard.
For Juno's fame, th' unnumber'd tuneful throng
With rich Mycenæ grace their favourite song,
And Argos boast, of pregnant glebe to feed
The warlike horse, and animate the breed:
But me, nor patient Lacedæmon charms,
Nor fair Larissa with such transport warms,
As pure Albunea's far-resounding source,
And rapid Anio, headlong in his course,
Or Tibur, fenc'd by groves from solar beams,
And fruitful orchards bath'd by ductile streams.
* * * * * * * * * * * * * *
The south wind often, when the welkin lowers,
Sweeps off the clouds, nor teems perpetual showers:
So, Plancus, be the happy wisdom thine,
To end the cares of life in mellow'd wine;
Whether the camp with banners bright display'd,
Or Tibur hold thee in its thick-wrought shade.
When Teucer from his sire and country fled,
With poplar wreaths the hero crown'd his head,
Reeking with wine, and thus his friends address'd,
Deep sorrow brooding in each anxious breast:
Bold let us follow through the foamy tides,
Where Fortune, better than a father, guides;

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Avaunt, despair! when Teucer calls to fame,
The same your augur, and your guide the same.
Another Salamis, in foreign clime,
With rival pride shall raise her head sublime;
So Phœbus nods: Ye sons of valour true,
Full often tried in deeds of deadlier hue,
To-day with wine drive every care away,
To-morrow tempt again the boundless sea.

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ODE VIII.

TO LYDIA.

BY the gods, my Lydia, tell,
Ah! why, by loving him too well,
Why you hasten to destroy
Young Sybaris, too am'rous boy?
Why he hates the sunny plain,
While he can sun or dust sustain?
Why no more, with martial pride,
Does he among his equals ride;
Or the Gallic steed command
With bitted curb and forming hand?
More than viper's baleful blood
Why does he fear the yellow flood?
Why detest the wrestler's oil,
While firm to bear the manly toil?
Where are now the livid scars
Of sportive, nor inglorious, wars,
When for the quoit, with vigour thrown
Beyond the mark, his fame was known?
Tell us, why this fond disguise,
In which like Thetis' son he lies,
Ere unhappy Troy had shed
Her funeral sorrows for the dead,
Lest a manly dress should fire
His soul to war and carnage dire.

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ODE IX.

TO THALIARCHUS.

BEHOLD Soracte's airy height,
See how it stands a heap of snow;
Behold the winter's hoary weight
Oppress the labouring woods below;
And, by the season's icy hand
Congeal'd, the lazy rivers stand.

Now melt away the winter's cold,
And larger pile the cheerful fire;
Bring down the vintage four-year-old,
Whose mellow'd heat can mirth inspire;
Then to the guardian powers divine
Careless the rest of life resign:

For, when the warring winds arise,
And o'er the fervid ocean sweep,
They speak—and lo! the tempest dies
On the smooth bosom of the deep;
Unshaken stands the aged grove,
And feels the providence of Jove.

To-morrow with its cares despise,
And make the present hour your own,
Be swift to catch it as it flies,
And score it up as clearly won;
Nor let your youth disdain to prove
The joys of dancing and of love.

Now let the grateful evening-shade,
The public walks, the public park,
An assignation sweetly made
With gentle whispers in the dark:
While age morose thy vigour spares,
Be [illegible] thy pleasures, these thy cares.

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The laugh, that from the corner flies,
  The sportive fair-one shall betray;
Then boldly snatch the joyful prize;
  A ring or bracelet tear away,
While she, not too severely coy,
Struggling shall yield the willing toy.

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ODE X.

HYMN TO MERCURY.

I SING the god, whose arts refin'd
The savage race of human kind,
By eloquence their passions charm'd,
By exercise their bodies form'd:
Hail, winged messenger of Jove
And all th' immortal powers above,
Sweet parent of the bending lyre,
Thy praise shall all its sounds inspire.
Artful and cunning to conceal
Whate'er in sportive theft you steal,
When from the god who gilds the pole,
Even yet a boy, his herds you stole,
With angry voice the threat'ning power
Bad thee the fraudful prey restore;
But of his quiver too beguil'd,
Pleas'd with the theft Apollo smil'd.
You were the wealthy Priam's guide
When safe from Agamemnon's pride,
Through hostile camps, which round him spread
Their watchful fires, his way he sped.
Unspotted spirits you consign
To blissful seats and joys divine,
And powerful with your golden wand
The light, unbodied crowd command:
Thus grateful does your office prove
To gods below, and gods above.

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ODE XI.

TO LEUCONOE.

STRIVE not, Leuconoë, to pry
  Into the secret will of fate,
Nor impious magic vainly try,
  To know our lives' uncertain date;

Whether th' indulgent power divine
  Hath many seasons yet in store,
Or this the latest winter thine,
  Which breaks its waves against the shore.

Thy life with wiser arts be crown'd,
  Thy filter'd wines abundant pour;
The lengthen'd hope with prudence bound
  Proportion'd to the flying hour;

Even while we talk in careless ease,
  Our envious minutes wing their flight;
Then swift the fleeting pleasure seize,
  Nor trust to-morrow's doubtful light.

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ODE XII.

HYMN TO JOVE.

WHAT man, what hero, on the tuneful lyre,
Or sharp-ton'd flute, will Clio choose to raise
Deathless to fame? What god? whose hallow'd name
The sportive image of the voice
Shall in the shades of Helicon repeat,
On Pindus, or on Hæmus, ever cool,
From whence the forests in confusion rose
To follow Orpheus and his song:
He, by his mother's art, with soft delay
Could stop the river's rapid lapse, or check
The winged winds; with strings of concord sweet
Powerful the listening oaks to lead.
Claims not th' eternal Sire his wonted praise?
Awful who reigns o'er gods and men supreme,
Who sea and earth—this universal globe
With grateful change of seasons guides;
From whom no being of superior power,
Nothing of equal, second glory, springs,
Yet first of all his progeny divine
Immortal honours Pallas claims:
God of the vine, in deeds of valour bold,
Fair virgin-huntress of the savage race,
And Phœbus, dreadful with unerring dart,
Nor will I not your praise proclaim.
Alcides' labours, and fair Leda's twins,
Fam'd for the rapid race, for wrestling fam'd,
Shall grace my song; soon as whose star benign
Through the fierce tempest shines serene,
Swift from the rocks down foams the broken surge,
Calm are the winds, the driving clouds disperse,
And all the threatening waves, so will the gods,
Smooth sink upon the peaceful deep.
Here stops the song, doubtful whom next to praise,
Or Romulus, or Numa's peaceful reign,

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The haughty ensigns of a Tarquin's throne,
  Or Cato, glorious in his fall.
Grateful in higher tone the Muse shall sing
The fate of Regulus, the Scaurian race,
And Paulus, 'midst the waste of Cannæ's field,
  How greatly prodigal of life!
Form'd by the hand of penury severe,
In dwellings suited to their small demesne,
Fabricius, Curius, and Camillus rose;
  To deeds of martial glory rose.
Marcellus, like a youthful tree, of growth
Insensible, high shoots his spreading fame,
And like the moon, the feebler fires among,
  Conspicuous shines the Julian star.
Saturnian Jove, parent and guardian god
Of human race, to thee the fates assign
The care of Cæsar's reign; to thine alone
  Inferior let his empire rise;
Whether the Parthian's formidable powers,
Or farthest India's oriental sons,
With suppliant pride beneath his triumph fall,
  Wide o'er a willing world shall he
Contented reign, and to thy throne shall bend
Submissive. Thou in thy tremendous car
Shalt shake Olympus' head, and at our groves
  Polluted, hurl thy dreadful bolts.

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ODE XIII.

TO LYDIA.

AH! when on Telephus his charms,
When on his rosy neck and waxen arms,
Lydia with ceaseless rapture dwells,
With jealous spleen my glowing bosom swells,
My reason in confusion flies,
And on my cheek th' uncertain colour dies,
While the down-stealing tear betrays
The lingering flame, that on my vitals preys.
I burn, when in excess of wine,
Brutal, he soils those snowy arms of thine,
Or on thy lips the fierce-fond boy
Impresses with his teeth the furious joy.
If yet my voice can reach your ear,
Hope not to find him constant and sincere,
Cruel who hurts the fragrant kiss,
Which Venus bathes with quintessence of bliss.
Thrice happy they, whom love unites
In equal rapture, and sincere delights,
Unbroken by complaints or strife,
Even to the latest hours of life.

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ODE XIV.

TO THE REPUBLIC.

UNHAPPY vessel! shall the waves again
Tumultuous bear thee to the faithless main?
What would thy madness, thus with storms to sport?
Cast firm your anchor in the friendly port.
Behold thy naked decks; the wounded mast
And sail-yards groan beneath the southern blast,
Nor without ropes thy keel can longer brave
The rushing fury of th' imperious wave:
Torn are thy sails, thy guardian gods are lost,
Whom you might call in future tempests tost.
What though majestic in your pride you stood
A noble daughter of the Pontic wood,
You now may vainly boast an empty name,
Or birth conspicuous in the rolls of fame.
The mariner, when storms around him rise,
No longer on a painted stern relies.
Ah! yet take heed, lest these new tempests sweep
In sportive rage thy glories to the deep.
Thou late my deep anxiety and fear,
And now my fond desire and tender care,
Ah! yet take heed, avoid those fatal seas
That roll among the shining Cyclades.

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ODE XV.

THE PROPHECY OF NEREUS.

WHEN the perfidious shepherd bore
The Spartan dame to Asia's shore,
Nereus the rapid winds oppress'd,
And calm'd them to unwilling rest,
That he might sing the dreadful fate
Which should their guilty loves await.
Fatal to Priam's ancient sway
You bear th'ill-omen'd fair away;
For soon shall Greece in arms arise,
Deep-sworn to break thy nuptial ties.
What toils do men and horse sustain!
What carnage loads the Dardan plain!
Pallas prepares the bounding car,
The shield and helm and rage of war.
Though proud of Venus' guardian care,
In vain you comb your flowing hair;
In vain you sweep th' unwarlike string,
And tender airs to females sing;
For though the dart may harmless prove
(The dart that frights the bed of love);
Though you escape the noise of fight,
Nor Ajax can o'ertake thy flight;
Yet shalt thou, infamous of lust,
Soil those adulterous hairs in dust.
Look back and see, with furious pace,
That ruin of the Trojan race,
Ulysses drives, and sage in years
Fam'd Nestor, hoary chief, appears.
Intrepid Teucer sweeps the field,
And Sthenelus, in battle skill'd;
Or skill'd to guide with steady rein,
And pour his chariot o'er the plain.
Undaunted Merion shalt thou feel;
While Diomed with furious steel,

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In arms superior to his sire,
Burns after thee with martial fire.
As when a stag at distance spies
A prowling wolf, aghast he flies
Of pasture heedless; so shall you,
High-panting, fly when they pursue.
Not such the promises you made,
Which Helen's easy heart betray'd.
Achilles' fleet with short delay
Vengeful protracts the fatal day;
But when ten rolling years expire,
Thy Troy shall blaze in Grecian fire.

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ODE XVI.

TO TYNDARIS.

Palinodia

DAUGHTER, whose loveliness the bosom warms
More than thy lovely mother's riper charms,
Give to my bold lampoons what fate you please,
To wasting flames condemn'd, or angry seas.
But yet remember, nor the god of wine,
Nor Pythian Phœbus from his inmost shrine,
Nor Dindymene, nor her priests possest,
Can with their sounding cymbals shake the breast
Like furious anger in its gloomy vein,
Which neither temper'd sword, nor raging main,
Nor fire wide-wasting, nor tremendous Jove
Rushing in baleful thunders from above,
Can tame to fear. Thus sings the poet's lay—
Prometheus to inform his nobler clay
Their various passions chose from ev'ry beast,
And with the lion's rage inspir'd the human breast.
From anger all the tragic horrors rose,
That crush'd Thyestes with a weight of woes;
From hence proud cities date their utter falls,
When, insolent in ruin, o'er their walls
The wrathful soldier drags the hostile plough,
That haughty mark of total overthrow.
Me too in youth the heat of anger fir'd,
And with the rapid rage of rhime inspir'd;
But now, repentant, shall the Muse again
To softer numbers tune her melting strain,
So thou recall thy threats, thy wrath controul,
Resume thy love, and give me back my soul.

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ODE XVII.

TO TYNDARIS.

PAN from Arcadia's hills descends
  To visit oft my Sabine seat,
And here my tender goats defends
  From rainy winds, and summer's fiery heat;

For when the vales, wide-spreading round,
  The sloping hills, and polish'd rocks
With his harmonious pipe resound,
  In fearless safety graze my wandering flocks;

In safety, through the woody brake,
  The latent shrubs and thyme explore,
Nor longer dread the speckled snake,
  And tremble at the martial wolf no more.

Their poet to the gods is dear,
  They love his piety and muse,
And all our rural honours here
  Their flow'ry wealth around thee shall diffuse.

Here shall you tunc Anacreon's lyre,
  Beneath a shady mountain's brow,
To sing frail Circe's guilty fire,
  And chaste Penelope's unbroken vow.

Far from the burning dog-star's rage
  Here shall you quaff our harmless wine;
Nor here shall Mars intemperate wage
  Rude war with him who rules the jovial vine:

Nor Cyrus' bold suspicious fear;
  Not on thy softness shall he lay
His desperate hand, thy clothes to tear,
  Or brutal snatch thy festal crown away.

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ODE XVIII.

TO VARUS.

ROUND Catilus' walls, or in Tibur's rich soil,
To plant the glad vine be my Varus' first toil;
For God hath propos'd to the wretch who's athirst,
To drink, or with heart-gnawing cares to be curst.
Of war, or of want, who e'er prates o'er his wine?
For 'tis thine, father Bacchus; bright Venus, 'tis thine,
To charm all his cares. Yet that no one may pass
The freedom and mirth of a temperate glass,
Let us think on the Lapithæ's quarrels so dire,
And the Thracians, whom wine can to madness inspire:
Insatiate of liquor when glow their full veins,
No distinction of vice or of virtue remains.
Great god of the vine, who dost candour approve,
I ne'er will thy statues profanely remove;
I ne'er will thy rites, so mysterious, betray
To the broad-glaring eye of the tale-telling day.
Oh! stop the loud cymbal, the cornet's alarms,
Whose sound, when the Bacchanal's bosom it warms,
Arouses self-love, by blindness misled,
And vanity, lifting aloft the light head,
And honour, of prodigal spirit, that shows,
Transparent as glass, all the secrets it knows.

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ODE XIX.

ON GLYCERA.

VENUS, who gave the Cupids birth,
And the resistless god of wine,
With the gay power of wanton mirth,
Now bid my heart its peace resign;
Again for Glycera I burn,
And all my long-forgotten flames return.

Like Parian marble pure and bright,
The shining maid my bosom warms;
Her face, too dazzling for the sight,
Her sweet coquetting—how it charms!
Whole Venus rushing through my veins,
No longer in her favourite Cyprus reigns;

No longer suffers me to write
Of Scythians, fierce in martial deed,
Or Parthian, urging in his flight
The battle with reverted steed:
Such themes she will no more approve,
Nor aught that sounds impertinent to love.

Here let the living altar rise
Adorn'd with every herb and flower;
Here flame the incense to the skies,
And purest wine's libation pour;
Due honours to the goddess paid,
Soft sinks to willing love the yielding maid.

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ODE XX.

TO MÆCENAS.

A POET's beverage, vile and cheap
(Should great Mæcenas be my guest),
Crude vintage of the Sabine grape,
But yet in sober cups, shall crown the feast:

'Twas rack'd into a Grecian cask,
Its rougher juice to melt away:
I seal'd it too—a pleasing task!
With annual joy to mark the glorious day,

When in applausive shouts thy name
Spread from the theatre around,
Floating on thy own Tiber's stream,
And Echo, playful nymph, return'd the sound.

From the Cæcubian vintage prest
For you shall flow the racy wine;
But ah! my meagre cup's unblest
With the rich Formian or Falernian vine.

[*For the TWENTY-FIRST ODE, see "The Secular Poem"*]

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ODE XXII.

TO ARISTIUS FUSCUS.

THE man who knows not guilty fear
Nor wants the bow nor pointed spear;
Nor needs, while innocent of heart,
The quiver teeming with the poison'd dart,

Whether through Libya's burning sands
His journey leads, or Scythia's lands,
Inhospitable waste of snows,
Or where the fabulous Hydaspes flows:

For musing on my lovely maid
While careless in the woods I stray'd,
A wolf—how dreadful! cross'd my way,
Yet fled—he fled from his defenceless prey:

No beast of such portentous size
In warlike Daunia's forests lies,
Nor such the tawny lion reigns
Fierce on his native Afric's thirsty plains.

Place me, where never summer breeze
Unbinds the glebe, or warms the trees;
Where ever-lowering clouds appear,
And angry Jove deforms th' inclement year:

Place me beneath the burning ray,
Where rolls the rapid car of day;
Love and the nymph shall charm my toils,
The nymph who sweetly speaks and sweetly smiles.

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ODE XXIII.

TO CHLOE.

CHLOE flies me like a fawn,
Which through some sequester'd lawn
Panting seeks the mother-deer,
Not without a panic fear
Of the gently-breathing breeze,
And the motion of the trees.
If the curling leaves but shake,
If a lizard stir the brake,
Frighted it begins to freeze,
Trembling both at heart and knees.
But not like a tiger dire,
Nor a lion fraught with ire,
I pursue my lovely game
To destroy her tender frame.
Haste thee, leave thy mother's arms;
Ripe for love are all thy charms.

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ODE XXIV.

TO VIRGIL.

WHEREFORE restrain the tender tear?
Why blush to weep for one so dear?
Sweet Muse, of melting voice and lyre,
Do thou the mournful song inspire.
Quintilius——sunk to endless rest,
With death's eternal sleep oppress'd!
Oh! when shall Faith, of soul sincere,
Of Justice pure the sister fair,
And Modesty, unspotted maid,
And Truth in artless guise array'd,
Among the race of human kind
An equal to Quintilius find?
How did the good, the virtuous mourn,
And pour their sorrows o'er his urn!
But, Virgil, thine the loudest strain.
Yet all thy pious grief is vain:
In vain do you the gods implore
Thy lov'd Quintilius to restore,
Whom on far other terms they gave,
By nature fated to the grave.
What though you can the lyre command,
And sweep its tones with softer hand
Than Orpheus, whose harmonious song
Once drew the listening trees along,
Yet ne'er returns the vital heat
The shadowy form to animate;
For when the ghost-compelling god
Forms his black troops with horrid rod,
He will not, lenient to the breath
Of prayer, unbar the gates of death.
'Tis hard: but patience must endure,
And sooth the woes it cannot cure.

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ODE XXV.

TO LYDIA.

THE wanton herd of rakes profest
Thy windows rarely now molest
With midnight raps, or break thy rest
With riot.
The door, that kindly once could move
The pliant hinge, begins to love
Its threshold, and no more shall prove
Unquiet.

Now less and less assail thine ear
These plaints, " Ah, sleepest thou, my dear,
" While I whole nights, thy true-love, here
" Am dying?"
You in your turn shall weep the taunts
Of young and insolent gallants,
In some dark alley's midnight haunts
Late plying:

While raging tempests chill the skies,
And burning lust (such lust as tries
The madding dams of horses) fries
Thy liver;
Our youth, regardless of thy frown,
Their heads with fresher wreaths shall crown,
And fling thy wither'd garlands down
The river.

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ODE XXVI.

TO HIS MUSE.

WHILE in the Muse's friendship blest,
Nor fear nor grief shall break my rest;
Bear them, ye vagrant winds, away,
And drown them in the Cretan sea.
Careless am I, or who shall reign
The tyrant of the Scythian plain,
Or with what anxious fear oppress
Heaves Tiridates' panting breast.
Sweet Muse, who lov'st the virgin spring,
Hither thy sunny flow'rets bring,
And let thy richest chaplet shed
Its fragrance round my Lamia's head;
For nought avails the poet's praise,
Unless the Muse inspire his lays.
Oh! string the Lesbian lyre again,
Let all thy sisters raise the strain,
And consecrate to deathless fame
My lov'd, my Lamia's honour'd name.

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ODE XXVII.

TO HIS COMPANIONS.

WITH glasses made for gay delight
'Tis Thracian, savage rage to fight.
With such intemperate, bloody fray
Fright not the modest god away.
Monstrous! to see the dagger shine
Amidst the midnight joys of wine.
Here bid this impious clamour cease,
And press the social couch in peace.
Say, shall I drink this heady wine,
Press'd from the rough Falernian vine?
Instant, let yonder youth impart
The tender story of his heart,
By what dear wound he blissful dies,
And whence the gentle arrow flies.
What! does the bashful boy deny?
Then, if I drink it let me die.
Whoe'er she be, a generous flame
Can never know the blush of shame.
Thy breast no slave-born Venus fires,
But fair, ingenuous love inspires.
Then safely whisper in my ear,
For all such trusts are sacred here.
Ah! worthy of a better flame!
Unhappy youth! is she the dame?
Unhappy youth! how art thou lost,
In what a sea of troubles tost!
What drugs, what witchcraft, or what charms,
What god, can free thee from her arms?
Scarce Pegasus can disengage
Thy heart from this Chimæra's rage.

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ODE XXVIII.

A MARINER AND THE GHOST OF ARCHYTAS.

Mariner.

ARCHYTAS, what avails thy nice survey
Of ocean's countless sands, of earth and sea?
In vain thy mighty spirit once could soar
To orbs celestial, and their course explore;
If here, upon the tempest-beaten strand,
You lie confin'd, till some more liberal hand
Shall strow the pious dust in funeral rite,
And wing thee to the boundless realms of light.

Ghost.

Even he, who did with gods the banquet share,
Tithonus, rais'd to breathe celestial air,
And Minos, Jove's own counsellor of state,
All these have yielded to the power of fate.

Mariner.

Even your own sage, whose monumental shield,
Borne through the terrors of the Trojan field,
Prov'd that alone the mouldering body dies,
And souls immortal from our ashes rise,
Even he a second time resign'd his breath,
Sent headlong to the gloomy realms of death:

Ghost.

Not meanly skill'd, even by your own applause,
In moral truth, and nature's secret laws.
One endless night for all mankind remains,
And once we all must tread the shadowy plains.
In horrid pomp of war the soldier dies;
The sailor in the greedy ocean lies;
Thus age and youth promiscuous crowd the tomb:
No mortal head can shun th' impending doom.
When sets Orion's star, the winds, that sweep
The raging waves, o'erwhelm'd me in the deep:

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Nor thou, my friend, refuse with impious hand
A little portion of this wandering sand
To these my poor remains; so may the storm
Rage o'er the woods, nor ocean's face deform:
May gracious Jove with wealth thy toils repay,
And Neptune guard thee through the watery way!
  Thy guiltless race this bold neglect shall mourn,
And thou shalt feel the just returns of scorn.
My curses shall pursue the guilty deed,
And all in vain thy richest victims bleed.
Whate'er thy haste, oh! let my prayer prevail,
Thrice strow the sand, then hoist the flying sail.

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ODE XXIX.

TO ICCIUS.

ICCIUS, the blest Arabia's gold
Can you with envious eye behold?
Or will you boldly take the field,
And teach Sabæa's kings to yield,
Or meditate the dreadful Mede
In chains triumphantly to lead?
Should you her hapless lover slay,
What captive maid shall own thy sway?
What courtly youth with essenc'd hair
Shall at thy board the goblet bear,
Skilful with his great father's art
To wing with death the pointed dart?
Who shall deny that streams ascend,
And Tiber's currents backward bend,
When you have all our hopes betray'd;
You, that far other promise made;
When all your volumes, learned store!
The treasures of Socratic lore,
Once bought at mighty price, in vain,
Are sent to purchase arms in Spain?

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ODE XXX.

TO VENUS.

QUEEN of beauty, queen of smiles,
Leave, oh! leave thy favourite isles:
A temple rises to thy fame,
Where Glycera invokes thy name,
And bids the fragrant incense flame.

With thee bring thy love-warm son,
The Graces bring with flowing zone,
The Nymphs, and jocund Mercury,
And sprightly Youth, who without thee
Is nought but savage Liberty.

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ODE XXXI.

TO APOLLO.

WHEN at Apollo's hallow'd shrine
The poet hails the power divine,
And here his first libations pours,
What is the blessing he implores?
He nor desires the swelling grain,
That yellows o'er Sardinia's plain;
Nor the fair herds, that lowing feed
On warm Calabria's flowery mead;
Nor ivory, of spotless shine;
Nor gold, forth-flaming from its mine;
Nor the rich fields that Liris laves,
And eats away with silent waves.
Let others quaff the racy wine
To whom kind Fortune gives the vine;
The golden goblet let him drain,
Who vent'rous ploughs th' Atlantic main,
Blest with three safe returns a-year,
For he to every god is dear.
To me boon Nature frankly yields
Her wholesome sallad from the fields;
Nor ask I more, than sense and health
Still to enjoy my present wealth.
From age and all its weakness free,
O son of Jove, preserv'd by thee,
Give me to strike the tuneful lyre,
And thou my latest song inspire.

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ODE XXXII.

TO HIS LYRE.

IF with thee beneath the shade
Many an idle air I play'd,
Now the Latian song, my lyre,
With some immortal strain inspire,
Such as once Alcæus sung,
Who, fierce in war, thy music strung,
When he heard the battle roar,
Or moor'd his sea-tost vessel on the shore.
Wine and the Muses were his theme,
And Venus, laughter-loving dame,
With Cupid ever by her side,
And Lycus, form'd in beauty's pride,
With his hair of jetty dye,
And the black lustre of his eye.
Charming shell, Apollo's love,
How grateful to the feasts of Jove!
Hear thy poet's solemn prayer,
Thou soft'ner of each anxious care.

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ODE XXXIII.

TO ALBIUS TIBULLUS.

NO more in elegiac strain
Of cruel Glycera complain,
Though she resign her faithless charms
To a new lover's younger arms.
The maid, for lovely forehead fam'd,
With Cyrus' beauties is enflam'd;
While Pholoë, of haughty charms,
The panting breast of Cyrus warms:
But wolves and goats shall sooner prove
The pleasures of forbidden love,
Than she her virgin honour stain,
And not the filthy rake disdain.
So Venus wills, whose power controuls
The fond affections of our souls;
With sportive cruelty she binds
Unequal forms, unequal minds.
Thus, when a better Venus strove
To warm my youthful breast to love,
Yet could a slave-born maid detain
My willing heart in pleasing chain,
Though fiercer she than waves that roar
Winding the rough Calabrian shore.

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ODE XXXIV.

A FUGITIVE from heaven and prayer,
I mock'd at all religious fear,
Deep scienc'd in the mazy lore
Of mad philosophy; but now
Hoist sail, and back my voyage plough
To that blest harbour, which I left before.

For lo! that awful heavenly Sire,
Who frequent cleaves the clouds with fire,
Parent of day, immortal Jove,
Late through the floating fields of air,
The face of heaven serene and fair,
His thundering steeds and winged chariot drove;

When, at the bursting of his flames,
The ponderous earth, and vagrant streams,
Infernal Styx, the dire abode
Of hateful Tænarus profound,
And Atlas to his utmost bound,
Trembled beneath the terrors of the god.

The hand of Jove can crush the proud
Down to the meanest of the crowd,
And raise the lowest in his stead;
But rapid Fortune pulls him down,
And snatches his imperial crown,
To place, not fix it, on another's head.

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ODE XXXV.

TO FORTUNE.

GODDESS, whom Antium, beauteous town, obeys,
Whose various will with instant power can raise
Frail mortals from the depths of low despair,
Or change proud triumphs to the funeral tear:

Thee the poor farmer, who with ceaseless pain
Labours the glebe; thee, mistress of the main,
The sailor, who with fearless spirit dares
The rising tempest, courts with anxious prayers:

Thee the rough Dacian, thee the vagrant band
Of field-born Scythians, Latium's warlike land,
Cities and nations, mother-queens revere,
And purple tyranny beholds with fear.

Nor in thy rage with foot destructive spurn
This standing pillar, and its strength o'erturn;
Nor let the nations rise in bold uproar,
And civil war, to break th' imperial power.

With solemn pace and firm, in awful state
Before thee stalks inexorable Fate,
And grasps empaling nails, and wedges dread,
The hook tormentous, and the melted lead:

Thee Hope and Honour, now, alas, how rare!
With white enrob'd, attend with duteous care,
When from the palace of the Great you fly
In angry mood, and garb of misery.

Not such the crowd of light companions prove,
Nor the false mistress of a wanton love,
Faithless who wait the lowest dregs to drain,
Nor friendship's equal yoke with strength sustain.

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Propitious guard our Cæsar, who explores
His vent'rous way to furthest Britain's shores;
Our new-rais'd troops be thy peculiar care,
Who dreadful to the East our banners bear.

Alas! the shameless scars! the guilty deeds,
When by a brother's hand a brother bleeds!
What crimes have we, an iron age, not dar'd?
In terror of the gods what altar spar'd?

Oh! that our swords with civil gore distain'd,
And in the sight of gods and men profan'd—
Sharpen again, dread queen, the blunted steel,
And let our foes the pointed vengeance feel.

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ODE XXXVI.

WITH incense heap the sacred fire,
And bolder strike the willing lyre.
Now let the heifer's votive blood
Pour to the gods its purple flood;
Those guardian gods, from furthest Spain,
Who send our Numida again.
A thousand kisses now he gives,
A thousand kisses he receives.
But Lamia most his friendship proves,
Lamia with tenderness he loves.
At school their youthful love began,
Whence they together rose to man.
With happiest marks the day shall shine,
Nor want th' abundant joy of wine;
Like Salian priests the dance we'll lead,
And many a mazy measure tread.
Now let the Thracian goblet foam,
Nor in the breathless draught o'ercome
Shall Bassus yield his boasted name
To Damalis of tippling fame.
Here let the rose and lily shed
Their short-liv'd bloom; let parsley spread
Its living verdure o'er the feast,
And crown with mingled sweets the guest.
On Damalis each amorous boy
Shall gaze with eyes that flow with joy,
While she, as curls the ivy-plant,
Shall twine luxuriant round her new gallant.

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ODE XXXVII.

TO HIS COMPANIONS.

NOW let the bowl with wine be crown'd,
Now lighter dance the mazy round,
And let the sacred couch be stor'd
With the rich dainties of a priestly board.

Sooner to draw the mellow'd wine,
Prest from the rich Cæcubian vine,
Were impious mirth, while yet elate
The queen breath'd ruin to the Roman state.

Surrounded by a tainted train,
Wretches enervate and obscene,
She rav'd of empire—nothing less—
Vast in her hopes, and giddy with success.

But, hardly rescu'd from the flames,
One lonely ship her fury tames;
While Cæsar with impelling oar
Pursu'd her flying from the Latian shore:

Her, with Egyptian wine inspir'd,
With the full draught to madness fir'd,
Augustus sober'd into tears,
And turn'd her visions into real fears.

As darting sudden from above
The hawk attacks a tender dove;
Or sweeping huntsman drives the hare
O'er wide Æmonia's icy deserts drear;

So Cæsar through the billows press'd
To lead in chains the fatal pest:
But she a nobler fate explor'd,
Nor woman-like beheld the deathful sword,

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Nor with her navy fled dismay'd,
In distant realms to seek for aid,
But saw unmov'd her state destroy'd,
Her palace desolate, a lonely void;

With fearless hand she dar'd to grasp
The writhings of the wrathful asp,
And suck the poison through her veins,
Resolv'd on death, and fiercer from its pains:

Then scorning to be led the boast
Of mighty Cæsar's naval host,
And arm'd with more than mortal spleen,
Defrauds a triumph, and expires a queen.

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ODE XXXVIII.

TO HIS SLAVE.

I TELL thee, boy, that I detest
The grandeur of a Persian feast,
Nor for me the linden's rind
Shall the flowery chaplet bind:
Then search not where the curious rose
Beyond his season loitering grows,
But beneath the mantling vine
While I quaff the flowing wine,
The myrtle's wreath shall crown our brows,
While you shall wait, and I carouse.

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ODES.

BOOK II.

ODE I.

TO ASINIUS POLLIO.

O POLLIO, thou the great defence
Of sad, impleaded innocence,
On whom, to weigh the grand debate,
In deep consult the fathers wait;
For whom the triumphs o'er Dalmatia spread
Unfading honours round thy laurel'd head,

Of warm commotions, wrathful jars,
The growing seeds of civil wars;
Of double Fortune's cruel games,
The specious means, the private aims,
And fatal friendships of the guilty great,
Alas! how fatal to the Roman state!

Of mighty legions late subdu'd,
And arms with Latian blood imbru'd,
Yet unaton'd (a labour vast!
Doubtful the dye, and dire the cast!)
You treat adventurous, and incautious tread
On fires with faithless embers overspread:

Retard awhile thy glowing vein,
Nor swell the solemn, tragic scene;
And when thy sage, historic cares
Have form'd the train of Rome's affairs,
With lofty rapture re-inflam'd, infuse
Heroic thoughts, and wake the buskin'd Muse:

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Hark! the shrill clarion's voice I hear,
Its threatening murmurs pierce mine ear;
And in thy lines, with brazen breath,
The trumpet sounds the charge of death;
While the strong splendors of the sword affright
The flying steed, and mar the rider's sight!

Panting with terror, I survey
The martial host in dread array,
The chiefs, how valiant and how just!
Defil'd with not inglorious dust,
And all the world in chains, but Cato see
Of spirit unsubdu'd, and dying to be free.

Imperial Juno, fraught with ire,
And all the partial gods of Tyre,
Who, feeble to revenge her cries,
Retreated to their native skies,
Have in the victor's bleeding race repaid
Jugurtha's ruin, and appeas'd his shade.

What plain, by mortals travers'd o'er,
Is not enrich'd with Roman gore?
Unnumber'd sepulchres record
The deathful harvest of the sword,
And proud Hesperia, rushing into thrall,
While distant Parthia heard the cumbrous fall.

What gulph, what rapid river flows
Unconscious of our wasteful woes?
What rolling sea's unfathom'd tide
Have not the Daunian slaughters dy'd?
What coast, encircled by the briny flood,
Boasts not the shameful tribute of our blood?

But thou, my Muse, to whom belong
The sportive jest and jocund song,
Beyond thy province cease to stray,
Nor vain revive the plaintive lay:
Seek humbler measures, indolently laid
With me beneath some love-sequester'd shade.

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ODE II.

TO CRISPUS SALLUSTIUS.

GOLD hath no lustre of its own,
It shines by temperate use alone,
And when in earth it hoarded lies,
My Sallust can the mass despise.
With never-failing wing shall Fame
To latest ages bear the name
Of Proculeius, who could prove
A father, in a brother's love.
By virtue's precepts to controul
The furious passions of the soul
Is over wider realms to reign,
Unenvied monarch, than if Spain
You could to distant Lybia join,
And both the Carthages were thine.
The Dropsy, by indulgence nurs'd,
Pursues us with increasing thirst,
Till art expels the cause, and drains
The watery langour from our veins.
But Virtue can the crowd unteach
Their false, mistaken forms of speech;
Virtue, to crowds a foe profest,
Disdains to number with the blest
Phraates, by his slaves ador'd,
And to the Parthian crown restor'd,
And gives the diadem, the throne,
And laurel wreath, to him alone
Who can a treasur'd mass of gold
With firm, undazzled eye behold.

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ODE III.

TO DELLIUS.

IN adverse hours an equal mind maintain,
Nor let your spirit rise too high,
Though Fortune kindly change the scene—
Remember, Dellius, you were born to die.

Whether your life in sorrows pass,
And sadly joyless glide away;
Whether, reclining on the grass,
You bless with choicer wine the festal day,

Where the pale poplar and the pine
Expel the sun's intemperate beam,
In hospitable shades their branches twine,
And winds with toil, though swift, the tremulous stream.

Here pour your wines, your odours shed,
Being forth the rose's short-liv'd flower,
While Fate yet spins thy mortal thread,
While youth and fortune give th' indulgent hour.

Your purchas'd woods, your house of state,
Your villa, wash'd by Tiber's wave,
You must, my Dellius, yield to Fate,
And to your heir these high-pil'd treasures leave.

Whether you boast a monarch's birth,
While wealth unbounded round you flows,
Or poor, and sprung from vulgar earth,
No pity for his victim Pluto knows.

We all must tread the paths of Fate;
And ever shakes the mortal urn,
Whose lot embarks us, soon or late,
On Charon's boat, ah! never to return.

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ODE IV.

TO XANTHIAS PHOCEUS.

LET not my Phoceus think it shame
For a fair slave to own his flame;
A slave could stern Achilles move,
And bend his haughty soul to love:
Ajax, invincible in arms,
Was captiv'd by his captive's charms:
Atrides 'midst his triumphs mourn'd,
And for a ravish'd virgin burn'd,
What time the fierce barbarian bands
Fell by Pelides' conquering hands,
And Troy (her Hector swept away)
Became to Greece an easier prey.
Who knows, when Phyllis is your bride,
To what fine folk you'll be allied?
Her parents dear, of gentle race,
Shall not their son-in-law disgrace.
She sprang from kings, or nothing less,
And weeps the family's distress.
Think not that such a charming she
Can of the wretched vulgar be,
A maid, so faithful and so true
To love, to honour, and to you!
Her dear mamma, right-virtuous dame,
Could ne'er have known the blush of shame.
While thus with innocence I praise,
Let me no jealous transports raise.
Heart-whole and sound I laud her charms,
Her face, her taper legs, her arms;
For, trembling on to forty years,
My age forbids all jealous fears.

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ODE V.

SEE, thy heifer's yet unbroke
To the labours of the yoke,
Nor hath strength enough to prove
Such impetuous weight of love.
Round the fields her fancy strays,
O'er the mead she sportive plays;
Now beneath the sultry beam
Cools her in the passing stream,
Now with frisking steerlings young
Sports the sallow groves among.
Do not then commit a rape
On the crude, unmellow'd grape:
Autumn soon, of various dyes,
Shall with kinder warmth arise,
Bid the livid clusters glow,
And a riper purple show.
Time to her shall count each day,
Which from you it takes away,
Till with bold and forward charms
She shall rush into your arms.
Pholoë, the flying fair,
Shall not then with her compare;
Nor the maid of bosom bright,
Like the moon's unspotted light,
O'er the waves, with silver rays,
When its floating lustre plays;
Nor the Cnidian fair and young,
Who, the virgin-choir among,
Might deceive, in female guise,
Strangers, though extremely wise,
With the difference between
Sexes hardly to be seen,
And his hair of flowing grace,
And his boyish, girlish face.

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ODE VI.

TO SEPTIMIUS.

SEPTIMIUS, who hast vow'd to go
With Horace even to farthest Spain,
Or see the fierce Cantabrian foe,
Untaught to bear the Roman chain,
Or the barbaric Syrts, with mad recoil
Where Mauritanian billows ceaseless boil:

May Tibur to my latest hours
Afford a kind and calm retreat;
Tibur, beneath whose lofty towers
The Grecians fix'd their blissful seat:
There may my labours end, my wanderings cease,
There all my toils of warfare rest in peace!

But should the partial Fates refuse
That purer air to let me breathe,
Galesus, thy sweet stream I'll choose,
Where flocks of richest fleeces bathe:
Phalantus there his rural sceptre sway'd,
Uncertain offspring of a Spartan maid.

No spot so joyous smiles to me
Of this wide globe's extended shores;
Where nor the labours of the bee
Yield to Hymettus' golden stores,
Nor the green berry of Venafran soil
Swells with a riper flood of fragrant oil.

There Jove his kindest gifts bestows,
There joys to crown the fertile plains;
With genial warmth the winter glows,
And spring with lengthen'd honours reigns;

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Nor Aulon, friendly to the clustering vine,
Envies the vintage of Falernian wine.

That happy place, that sweet retreat,
The charming hills that round it rise,
Your latest hours and mine await:
And when at length your Horace dies,
There the deep sigh thy poet-friend shall mourn,
And pious tears bedew his glowing urn.

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ODE VII.

TO POMPEIUS VARUS.

VARUS, from early youth belov'd,
And oft with me in danger prov'd,
Our daring host when Brutus led,
And in the cause of freedom bled,
To Rome and all her guardian powers
What happy chance the friend restores,
With whom I've cheer'd the tedious day,
And drunk its loitering hours away,
Profuse of sweets while Syria shed
Her liquid odours on my head?
With thee I saw Philippi's plain,
Its fatal rout, a fearful scene!
And dropp'd, alas! th' inglorious shield,
Where valour's self was forc'd to yield,
Where soil'd in dust the vanquish'd lay,
And breath'd th' indignant soul away.
But me, when dying with my fear,
Through warring hosts, inwrapp'd in air,
Swift did the god of wit convey;
While thee wild war's tempestuous sea
In ebbing tides drove far from shore,
And to new scenes of slaughter bore.
To Jove thy votive offerings paid,
Beneath my laurel's sheltering shade,
Fatigu'd with war, now rest reclin'd,
Nor spare the casks for thee design'd.
Here joyous fill the polish'd bowl,
With wine oblivious cheer thy soul,
And from the breathing phials pour
Of essenc'd sweets a larger shower.
But who the wreath unfading weaves
Of parsley, or of myrtle leaves?

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To whom shall beauty's queen assign
To reign the monarch of our wine?
For Thracian-like I'll drink to-day,
And deeply Bacchus it away.
Our transports for a friend restor'd
Should ev'n to madness shake the board.

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ODE VIII.

TO BARINE.

IF e'er th' insulted powers had shed
Their vengeance on thy perjur'd head;
If they had mark'd thy faithless truth
With one foul nail, or blacken'd tooth,
Again thy falsehood might deceive,
And I the faithless vow believe.
  But when, perfidious, you engage
To meet high heaven's vindictive rage,
You rise, with heighten'd lustre fair,
Of all our youth the public care.
  It thrives with thee to be forsworn
By thy dead mother's hallow'd urn:
By heaven, and all the stars that roll
In silent circuit round the pole:
By heaven, and every nightly sign,
By every deathless power divine.
Yes; Venus laughs, the nymphs with smiles,
The simple nymphs! behold thy wiles,
And with the blood of some poor swain
By thy perfidious beauty slain,
Fierce Cupid whets his burning darts,
For thee to wound new lovers' hearts.
  Thy train of slaves grows every day,
Infants are rising to thy sway;
And they who swore to break thy chain
Yet haunt those impious doors again.
  Thee for their boys the mothers fear,
The frugal father for his heir;
And weeping stands the virgin bride,
In Hymen's fetters lately tied.
Lest you detain, with brighter charms,
Her perjur'd husband from her arms.

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ODE IX.

TO VALGIUS.

NOR everlasting rain deforms
The squalid fields; nor endless storms,
Inconstant, vex the Caspian main;
Nor on Armenia's frozen plain
The loitering snow unmelting lies;
Nor, loud when northern winds arise,
The labouring forests bend the head,
Nor yet their leafy honours shed:
Yet still in elegiac strains
My Valgius for his son complains,
When Vesper lifts his evening ray,
Or flies the rapid beam of Day.
Not for his son the Grecian sage,
Renown'd for thrice the mortal age:
Not for their youthful brother dead,
Such sorrows Priam's daughters shed.
At length these weak complaints give o'er,
Indulge th' unmanly grief no more:
But let us bolder sweep the string,
And Cæsar's new-rais'd trophies sing;
The Tigris, and its freezing flood,
Euphrates, with its realms, subdu'd;
Whose waves are taught with humbler pride
Smoother to roll their lessening tide;
The Scythians, who reluctant yield,
Nor pour their squadrons o'er the field.

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ODE X.

TO LICINIUS MURENA.

LICINIUS, would you live with ease,
Tempt not too far the faithless seas,
And when you hear the tempest roar,
Press not too near th' unequal shore.
The man, within the golden mean
Who can his boldest wish contain,
Securely views the ruin'd cell,
Where sordid want and sorrow dwell,
And, in himself serenely great,
Declines an envied room of state.
When high in air the pine ascends,
To every ruder blast it bends.
The palace falls with heavier weight,
When tumbling from its airy height;
And when from heaven the lightning flies,
It blasts the hills that proudest rise.
Whoe'er enjoys the untroubled breast,
With virtue's tranquil wisdom blest,
With hope the gloomy hour can cheer,
And temper happiness with fear.
If Jove the winter's horrors bring,
Yet Jove restores the genial spring.
Then let us not of Fate complain,
For soon shall change the gloomy scene.
Apollo sometimes can inspire
The silent Muse, and wake the lyre:
The deathful bow not always plies,
Th' unerring dart not always flies.
When Fortune, various goddess, lowers,
Collect your strength, exert your powers;
But, when she breathes a kinder gale,
Be wise, and furl your swelling sail.

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ODE XI.

TO QUINTIUS HIRPINUS.

BE not anxious, friend, to know
What our fierce Cantabrian foe,
What intends the Scythian's pride,
Far from us whom seas divide.
Tremble not with vain desires,
Few the things which life requires.
Youth with rapid swiftness flies,
Beauty's lustre quickly dies,
Wither'd Age drives far away
Gentle sleep and amorous play.
When in vernal bloom they glow,
Flowers their gayest honours show.
Nor the moon with equal grace
Always lifts her ruddy face.
Thus while nature's works decay,
Busy mortal, prithee say,
Why do you fatigue the mind,
Not for endless schemes design'd?
Thus beneath this lofty shade,
Thus in careless freedom laid,
While Assyrian essence sheds
Liquid fragrance on our heads,
While we lie with roses crown'd,
Let the cheerful bowl go round:
Bacchus can our cares controul,
Cares that prey upon the soul.
Who shall from the passing stream
Quench our wine's Falernian flame?
Who the vagrant wanton bring,
Mistress of the lyric string,
With her flowing tresses tied,
Loosely, like a Spartan bride?

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ODE XII.

TO MÆCENAS.

NUMANTIA's wars, for years maintain'd,
Or Hannibal's vindictive ire,
Or seas with Punic gore distain'd,
Suit not the softness of my feeble lyre;

Nor savage Centaurs mad with wine,
Nor Earth's gigantic rebel brood,
Who shook old Saturn's seats divine,
Till by the arm of Hercules subdu'd.

You in historic prose shall tell
The mighty power of Cæsar's war;
How kings beneath his battle fell,
Or dragg'd indignant his triumphal car.

Licymnia's dulcet voice, her eye
Bright-darting its resplendent ray,
Her breast, where love and friendship lie,
The Muse commands me sing in softer lay;

In raillery the sportive jest,
Graceful her mien in dancing charms,
When playful at Diana's feast
To the bright virgin choir she winds her arms.

Say, shall the wealth by kings possest,
Or the rich diadems they wear,
Or all the treasures of the East,
Purchase one lock of my Licymnia's hair?

While now her bending neck she plies
Backward to meet the burning kiss,
Then with an easy cruelty denies,
Yet wishes you would snatch, not ask the bliss.

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ODE XIII.

WHOEVER rais'd and planted thee,
Unlucky and pernicious tree,
In hour accurs'd with impious hand
(Thou bane and scandal of my land)
Well may I think the parricide
In blood his guilty soul had dyed,
Or plung'd his dagger in the breast,
At midnight, of his sleeping guest,
Or temper'd every baleful juice
Which poisonous Colchian glebes produce;
Or, if a blacker crime be known,
That crime the wretch had made his own,
Who on my harmless grounds and me
Bestow'd thee, luckless, falling tree.
While dangers hourly round us wait,
No caution can prevent our fate.
All other deaths the sailor dares,
Who yet the raging ocean fears;
The Parthian views with deep dismay
The Roman chains, and firm array;
The Roman dreads the Parthian's speed,
His flying war, and backward reed;
While Death, unheeded, sweeps away
The world, his everlasting prey.
How near was I those dreary plains,
Where Pluto's auburn consort reigns;
Where awful sits the judge of hell;
Where pious spirits blissful dwell;
Where Sappho's sweet complaints reprove
The rivals of her fame and love,
Alcæus bolder sweeps the strings,
And seas, and war, and exile sings?
Thus while they strike the various lyre,
The ghosts the sacred sounds admire;
But when Alcæus tunes the strain
To deeds of war, and tyrants slain,

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In thicker crowds the shadowy throng
Drink deeper down the martial song.
What wonder? when with bending ears
The dog of hell astonish'd hears,
And, in the Furies' hair entwin'd,
The snakes with cheerful horror wind;
While, charm'd by the melodious strains,
The tortur'd ghosts forget their pains,
Orion quits his bold delight,
To chase the lion's rage, or lynx's flight.

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ODE XIV.

TO POSTUMUS.

HOW swiftly glide our flying years!
Alas! nor piety nor tears
Can stop the fleeting day;
Deep-furrow'd wrinkles, posting age,
And death's unconquerable rage,
Are strangers to delay.

Though every day a bull should bleed
To Pluto, bootless were the deed,
The monarch tearless reigns,
Where vultur-tortur'd Tityos lies,
And triple Geryon's monstrous size
The gloomy wave detains.

Whoever tastes of earthly food
Is doom'd to pass the joyless flood,
And hear the Stygian roar;
The sceptred king, who rules the earth,
The labouring hind, of humbler birth,
Must reach the distant shore.

The broken surge of Adria's main,
Hoarse-sounding, we avoid in vain,
And Mars in blood-stain'd arms;
The southern blast in vain we fear,
And autumn's life-annoying air
With idle fears alarms:

For all must see Cocytus flow,
Whose gloomy water sadly slow
Strays through the dreary soil.
The guilty maids, an ill-fam'd train!
And, Sisyphus, thy labours vain,
Condemn'd to endless toil.

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Your pleasing consort must be left,
And you, of villas, lands, bereft,
Must to the shades descend;
The cypress only, hated tree!
Of all thy much-lov'd groves, shall thee,
Its short-liv'd lord, attend.

Then shall your worthier heir discharge
And set th' imprison'd casks at large,
And dye the floor with wine,
So rich and precious, not the feasts
Of holy pontiffs cheer their guests
With liquor more divine.

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ODE XV.

IN royal pride our buildings rise,
The useless plough neglected lies;
Ponds broad as lakes our fields o'erspread;
Th' unmarried plane high waves the head
Above the elm; while all around,
Wafting their fragrance o'er the ground,
Where once the olive pour'd its shade,
And its rich master's cares repaid,
The violet and myrtle greets
The senses with a waste of sweets;
While vainly would Apollo's ray
Through our thick laurels pour the day;
Not such were Cato's sage decrees,
Nor Romulus by arts like these
In wisdom form'd th' imperial sway,
And bid th' unwilling world obey:
Though small each personal estate,
The public revenues were great;
Arcades were then by law confin'd,
Nor open'd to the northern wind:
Or turf, or brick, where Fortune pleas'd,
The private dwelling humbly rais'd,
While awful to the powers divine
Rose high to heaven the sacred shrine,
And all the public structures shone
Enrich'd with ornamental stone.

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ODE XVI.

TO POMPEIUS GROSPHUS.

CAUGHT in the wild Ægæan seas,
The sailor bends to heaven for ease,
While clouds the moon's fair lustre hide,
And not a star his course to guide.
Furious in war the Thracian prays,
The quiver'd Mede, for ease, for ease,
A blessing never to be sold
For gems, for purple, or for gold.
Nor can the consul's power controul
The sickly tumults of the soul,
Or bid the cares to stand aloof
That hover round the vaulted roof.
Happy the man whose frugal board
His father's plenty can afford:
His gentle sleep nor anxious fear
Shall drive away, nor sordid care.
Why do we aim with eager strife
At things beyond the mark of life?
To climates warm'd by other suns
In vain the wretched exile runs;
Flies from his country's native skies,
But never from himself he flies;
Corroding cares incessant charge
His flight, and climb his armed barge;
Or though he mount the rapid steed,
Care follows with unerring speed,
Far fleeter than the timorous hind,
Far fleeter than the driving wind.
The spirit that, serenely gay,
Careless enjoys the present day,
Can with an easy, cheerful smile
The bitterness of life beguile;
Nor fears the approaching hour of fate,
Nor hopes for human bliss complete.

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Achilles perish'd in his prime,
Tithon was worn away by time,
And Fate, with lavish hand, to me
May grant what it denies to thee.
A hundred bleating flocks are thine,
Around thee graze thy lowing kine;
Neighing thy mares invite the reins,
Thy robes the twice-dy'd purple stains:
On me not unindulgent Fate
Bestow'd a rural, calm retreat,
Where I may tune the Roman lyre,
And warm the song with Grecian fire;
Then scorn, in conscious virtue proud,
The worthless malice of the crowd.

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ODE XVII.

TO MÆCENAS.

WHY will Mæcenas thus complain,
Why kill me with the tender strain?
Nor can the gods nor I consent
That you, my life's great ornament,
Should sink untimely to the tomb,
While I survive the fatal doom.
Should you, alas! be snatch'd away,
Wherefore, ah! wherefore should I stay,
My value lost, no longer whole,
And but possessing half my soul?
One day, believe the sacred oath,
Shall lead the funeral pomp of both;
With thee to Pluto's dark abode,
With thee I'll tread the dreary road.
Nor fell Chimæra's breath of fire,
Nor hundred-handed Gyas dire,
Shall ever tear my friend from me:
So Justice and the Fates decree.
Whether fair Libra's kinder sign,
Or Scorpius with an eye malign
Beheld my birth (whose gloomy power
Rules dreadful o'er the natal hour);
Or Capricorn, with angry rays
Who shines the tyrant of the seas,
With equal beams our stars unite,
And strangely shed their mingled light.
Thee Jove's bright influence snatch'd away
From baleful Saturn's impious ray,
And stopp'd the rapid wings of Fate,
When the full theatre, elate,
With joyful transports hail'd thy name,
And thrice uprais'd the loud acclaim.
A tree, when falling on my head,
Had surely crush'd me to the dead,

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But Pan, the poet's guardian, broke,
With saving hand, the destin'd stroke.
For thee, let the rich victim's blood
Pour forth to Jove its purple flood;
For thee, the votive temple rise;
For me, a humble lambkin dies.

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ODE XVIII.

NO walls, with ivory inlaid,
Adorn my house; no colonnade
Proudly supports my citron beams,
Nor rich with gold my ceiling flames;
Nor have I, like an heir unknown,
Seiz'd upon Attalus his throne;
Nor dames, to happier fortunes bred,
Draw down for me the purple thread;
Yet with a firm and honest heart,
Unknowing or of fraud or art,
A liberal vein of genius blest,
I'm by the rich and great carest.
My patron's gift, my Sabine field
Shall all its rural plenty yield,
And, happy in that rural store,
Of heaven and him I ask no more.
Day presses on the heels of day,
And moons increase to their decay:
But you, with thoughtless pride elate,
Unconscious of impending fate,
Command the pillar'd dome to rise,
When lo! thy tomb forgotten lies,
And, though the waves indignant roar,
Forward you urge the Baian shore,
While earth's too narrow bounds in vain
Your guilty progress would restrain.
The sacred landmark strives in vain
Your impious avarice to restrain;
You break into your neighbour's grounds,
And overleap your client's bounds.
Driven out by thee, to new abodes
They carry their paternal gods;
The wife her husband's sorrow shares,
And on her breast her squalid infants bears.
Yet, destin'd by unerring Fate,
Shall death this wealthy lord await;

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Then whither tend thy wide demesnes?
For Earth impartial entertains
Her various sons, and in her breast
Princes and beggars equal rest.
  Nor gold could bribe, nor art deceive,
The gloomy life-guard of the grave
Backward to tread the shadowy way,
And waft Prometheus into day.
Yet he who Tantalus detains,
With all his haughty race, in chains,
Invok'd or not, the wretch receives,
And from the toils of life relieves.

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ODE XIX.

TO BACCHUS.

I SAW (let future times believe)
The god of wine his lectures give;
'Midst rocks far distant was the scene;
With ears erect the satyrs stood,
And every goddess of the wood
Listened th' instructive, solemn strain.

The recent terror heaves my breast,
Yet, with th' inspiring power possest,
Tumultuous joys my soul have warm'd;
Dreadful, who shak'st the ivy spear,
Thy votary thus prostrate hear,
And be thy rage, thy rage disarm'd.

Give me to sing, by thee inspir'd,
Thy priestesses to madness fir'd:
Fountains of wine shall pour along,
And, melting from the hollow tree,
The golden treasures of the bee,
And streams of milk shall fill the song.

Fair Ariadne's crown shall rise,
And add new glories to the skies:
While I to listening nations tell
How impious Pentheus' palace burn'd,
With hideous ruin overturn'd,
And how the mad Lycurgus fell.

Indus and Ganges own thy sway,
Barbaric seas thy power obey,
And o'er the pathless mountain's height
(Her head with horrid snakes enroll'd,
Which harmless writhe their angry fold)
Thy raptur'd priestess speeds her flight.

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When rising fierce in impious arms,
The giant-race with dire alarms
  Assail'd the sacred realms of light,
With lion-wrath, and dreadful paw,
With blood-besmear'd and foaming jaw,
  You put their horrid chief to flight.

For dancing form'd, for love and wit,
You seem'd for war's rude toils unfit,
  And polish'd to each softer grace:
But dreadful when in arms you shone,
You made the fatal art your own,
  In war excelling as in peace.

With golden horn supremely bright,
You darted round the bending light
  Far-beaming through the gloom of hell:
When Cerberus, with fear amaz'd,
Forgot his rage, and fawning gaz'd,
  And at thy feet adoring fell.

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ODE XX.

TO MÆCENAS.

WITH strong, unwonted wing I rise,
A two-form'd poet, through the skies.
Far above envy will I soar,
And tread this worthless earth no more.
For know, ye rivals of my fame,
Though lowly born, a vulgar name,
I will not condescend to die,
Nor in the Stygian waters lie.
A rougher skin now clothes my thighs,
Into a swan's fair form I rise,
And feel the feather'd plumage shed
Its down, and o'er my shoulders spread.
Swift as with Dædalean wing,
Harmonious bird, I'll soaring sing,
And, in my flight, the foamy shores
Where Bosphorus tremendous roars,
The regions bound by northern cold,
And Lybia's burning sands, behold.
Then to the learned sons of Spain,
To him who ploughs the Scythian main,
To him who, with dissembled fears,
Conscious, the Roman arms reveres,
To him who drinks the rapid Rhone,
Shall Horace, deathless bard! be known.
My friends, the funeral sorrow spare,
The plaintive song, and tender tear;
Nor let the voice of grief profane
With loud laments the solemn scene;
Nor o'er your poet's empty urn
With useless, idle sorrows mourn.

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ODES.

BOOK III.

ODE I.

MONARCHS on earth their power extend,
Monarchs to Jove submissive bend,
And own the sovereign god,
With glorious triumph who subdu'd
The Titan race, gigantic brood!
And shakes whole nature with his nod.

When rival candidates contend,
And to the field of Mars descend
To urge th' ambitious claim,
Some of illustrious birth are proud,
Some of their clients vassal crowd,
And some of virtue's fame.

Others the rural labour love,
And joy to plant the spreading grove,
The furrow'd glebe to turn;
Yet with impartial hand shall Fate
Both of the lowly and the great
Shake the capacious urn.

Behold the wretch, with conscious dread,
In pointed vengeance o'er his head
Who views th' impending sword;
Nor dainties force his pall'd desire,
Nor chant of birds, nor vocal lyre,
To him can sleep afford;

Heart-soothing sleep, which not disdains
The rural cot, and humble swains,
And shady river fair:

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Or Tempe's ever-blooming spring,
Where zephyrs wave the balmy wing,
  And fan the buxom air.

Who nature's frugal dictates hears,
He nor the raging ocean fears,
  Nor stars of power malign,
Whether in gloomy storms they rise,
Or swift descending through the skies
  With angry lustre shine;

Whether his vines be smit with hail,
Whether his promis'd harvests fail,
  Perfidious to his toil;
Whether his drooping trees complain
Of angry winter's chilling rain,
  Or stars that burn the soil.

Not such the haughty lord, who lays
His deep foundations in the seas,
  And scorns earth's narrow bound;
The fish, affrighted, feel their waves
Contracted by his numerous slaves,
  Even in the vast profound.

High though his structures rise in air,
Pale menaces, and black despair,
  This haughty lord shall find
O'ertake his armed galley's speed,
And when he mounts the flying steed,
  Sits gloomy Care behind.

If purple, which the morn outshines,
Or marble from the Phrygian mines,
  Though labour'd high with art,
If essence, breathing sweets divine,
Or flowing bowls of generous wine,
  Ill sooth an anxious heart,

On columns, rais'd in modern style,
Why should I plan the lofty pile
  To rise with envied state;
Why, for a vain, superfluous store,
Which would encumber me the more,
  Resign my Sabine seat?

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ODE II.

TO HIS FRIENDS.

OUR hardy youth should learn to bear
Sharp want, to rein the warlike steed,
To hurl the well-directed spear
With pointed force, and bid the Parthian bleed.

Thus form'd in war's tumultuous trade
Through summer's heat, and winter's cold,
Some tyrant's queen, or blooming maid,
Shall from her walls the martial youth behold:

"Let not, alas! my royal spouse,
Untaught the deathful sword to wield,
That lion in his anger rouse,
Whom furious rage drives through th' ensanguin'd field."

What joys, what glories round him wait,
Who bravely for his country dies!
While with dishonest wounds shall Fate
Relentless stab the coward as he flies.

With stainless lustre Virtue shines,
A base repulse nor knows, nor fears;
Nor claims her honours, nor declines,
As the light air of crowds uncertain veers:

To him who not deserves to die
She shows the paths which heroes trod,
Then bids him boldly tempt the sky,
Spurn off his mortal clay, and rise a god.

To silence due rewards we give;
And they who mysteries reveal
Beneath my roof shall never live,
Shall never hoist with me the doubtful sail.

When Jove in anger strikes the blow,
Oft with the bad the righteous bleed:
Yet with sure steps, though lame and slow,
Vengeance o'ertakes the trembling villain's speed.

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ODE III.

THE man, in conscious virtue bold,
Who dares his secret purpose hold,
Unshaken hears the crowd's tumultuous cries,
And the impetuous tyrant's angry brow defies.

Let the wild winds, that rule the seas
Tempestuous, all their horrors raise;
Let Jove's dread arm with thunders rend the spheres,
Beneath the crush of worlds undaunted he appears.

Thus to the flamy towers above,
The vagrant hero, son of Jove,
Upsoar'd with strength his own, where Cæsar lies,
And quaffs, with glowing lips, the bowl's immortal joys.

Lyæus thus his tigers broke,
Fierce and indocile to the yoke;
Thus from the gloomy regions of the dead,
On his paternal steeds, Rome's mighty founder fled;

When heaven's great queen with words benign
Address'd th' assembled powers divine——
Troy, hated Troy, an empire lewd, unjust,
And a proud foreign dame, have sunk thee to the dust.

To me, and wisdom's queen decreed,
With all thy guilty race to bleed,
What time thy haughty monarch's perjur'd sire
Mock'd the defrauded gods, and robb'd them of their hire.

The gaudy guest, of impious fame,
No more enjoys th' adulterous dame;
Hector no more his faithless brothers leads
To break the Grecian force; no more the victor bleeds.

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Since the long war now sinks to peace,
And all our heavenly factions cease;
Instant to Mars my vengeance I resign,
And here receive his son, though born of Trojan line.

Here, with encircling glories bright,
Free let him tread the paths of light,
And, rank'd among the tranquil powers divine,
Drink deep the nectar'd bowl, and quaff celestial wine.

From Rome to Troy's detested shores,
While loud a length of ocean roars,
Unenvied let th' illustrious exiles reign,
Where Fate directs their course, and spreads their wide domain.

On Priam's and th' adulterer's urn
While herds the dust insulting spurn,
Let the proud Capitol in glory stand,
And Rome, to triumph'd Medes, give forth her stern command:

Let the victorious voice of Fame
Wide spread the terrors of her name,
Where seas the continents of earth divide,
And Nilus bathes the plain with his prolific tide.

Let her the golden mine despise;
For deep in earth it better lies,
Than when by hands profane, from nature's store,
To human use compell'd, flames forth the sacred ore.

Where nature's utmost limits end,
Let her triumphant arms extend;
Or where the sun pours down his madding beams,
Or where the clouds are dark, and rain perpetual streams.

Thus let the warlike Romans reign
(So Juno and the Fates ordain),
But on these terms alone, no more to dare,
Through piety or pride, their parent Troy repair;

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For Troy rebuilt, ill-omen'd state!
Shall feel the same avenging fate;
Again my Grecians shall victorious prove,
By me led on to war, the sister-wife of Jove.

Thrice should Apollo raise her wall,
Thrice shall her brazen bulwarks fall,
Thrice shall her matrons feel the victor's chain,
Deplore their slaughter'd sons, deplore their husbands slain.

But whither would the Muse aspire?
Such themes nor suit the sportive lyre,
Nor should the wanton, thus in feeble strain,
The councils of the gods, immortal themes! profane.

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ODE IV.

TO CALLIOPE.

DESCEND from heaven, and in a lengthen'd strain,
Queen of melodious sounds, the song sustain,
Or on the voice high-rais'd, the breathing flute,
The lyre of golden tone, or sweet Phœbean lute.

Hark! some celestial voice I raptur'd hear!
Or does a pleasing phrensy charm my ear?
Through hallow'd groves I stray, where streams beneath
From lucid fountains flow, and zephyrs balmy breathe.

Fatigued with sleep, and youthful toil of play,
When on a mountain's brow reclin'd I lay
Near to my natal soil, around my head
The fabled woodland doves a verdant foliage spread;

Matter, be sure, of wonder most profound
To all the gazing habitants around,
Who dwell in Acherontia's airy glades,
Amid the Bantian woods, or low Ferentum's meads,

By snakes of poison black, and beasts of prey,
That thus, in dewy sleep, unharm'd I lay;
Laurels and myrtle were around me pil'd,
Not without guardian gods an animated child.

Yours, I am ever yours, harmonious Nine,
Whether I joy in Tibur's vale supine;
Whether I climb the Sabine mountain's height,
Or in Præneste's groves or Baian streams delight.

Nor tree devoted, nor tempestuous main,
Nor flying hosts, that swept Philippi's plain

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In fearful rout, your filial bard destroy'd,
While in your springs divine and choral sports he joy'd.

If by the Muse's faithful guidance led,
Or Libya's thirsty sands I'll fearless tread,
Or climb the venturous bark, and launch from shore,
Though Bosphorus in storms with madding horrors roar.

Nor Britons, of inhospitable strain,
Nor quiver'd Scythians, nor the Caspian main,
Nor he who joyous quaffs the thirsty bowl
Streaming with horses' blood, shall shake my dauntless soul.

When Cæsar, by your forming arts inspir'd,
Cheerful disbands his troops, of conquest tir'd,
And yields to willing Peace his laurel'd spoils,
In the Pierian cave you charm the hero's toils;

Gracious from you the lenient counsels flow,
Which bid the hero spare his prostrate foe;
For Cæsar rules like Jove, whose equal sway
The ponderous mass of earth and stormy seas obey:

O'er gods and mortals, o'er the dreary plains,
And shadowy ghosts, supremely just he reigns,
But, dreadful in his wrath, to hell pursu'd,
With thunder's headlong rage, the fierce Titanian brood,

Whose horrid youth, elate with impious pride,
Unnumber'd, on their sinewy force relied:
Mountain on mountain pil'd they rais'd in air,
And shook the throne of Jove, and bad the Thunderer fear.

But what could Mimas, of enormous might,
Typhœus, or Porphyrion's threatening height,
Or bold Enceladus fierce-darting far
The trunks of trees uptorn, dire archer of the war,

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Though with despair and rage inspir'd they rose,
To sage Minerva's sounding shield oppose?
While Vulcan here in flames devour'd his way,
There matron Juno stood, and there the god of day,

Resolv'd, till he had quell'd th' aspiring foe,
Never to lay aside th' unerring bow.
He the pure dew of fair Castalia loves,
There bathes his flowing hair, and haunts his natal groves.

Ill-counsell'd force, by its own native weight,
Precipitately falls; with happier fate
While the good gods upraise the just design,
And bold, unhallow'd schemes pursue with wrath divine.

This truth shall hundred-handed Gyas prove,
And warm Orion, who with impious love
Tempting the goddess of the sylvan scene,
Was by her virgin darts, gigantic victim! slain.

On her own monsters hurl'd with hideous weight,
Fond mother Earth deplores her offspring's fate,
By thunders dire to livid Orcus doom'd,
Nor fire can eat its way through Ætna unconsum'd.

Such are the pains to lawless lust decreed;
On Tityos' liver shall the vulture feed
With rage ungorg'd, while Pluto stern detains
His amorous rival bound in thrice an hundred chains.

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ODE V.

THE PRAISES OF AUGUSTUS.

DREAD Jove in thunder speaks his just domain;
On earth, a present god, shall Cæsar reign,
Since world-divided Britain owns his sway,
And Parthia's haughty sons his high behests obey.

O name of country, once how sacred deem'd!
O sad reverse of manners, once esteem'd!
While Rome her ancient majesty maintain'd;
In his own Capitol while Jove imperial reign'd,

Could they to foreign spousals meanly yield,
Whom Crassus led with honour to the field?
Have they, to their barbarian lords allied,
Grown old in hostile arms beneath a tyrant's pride,

Basely forgetful of the Roman name,
The heaven-descended shields, the Vestal flame,
That wakes eternal, and the peaceful gown,
Those emblems which the Fates with boundless empire crown?

When Regulus refus'd the terms of peace
Inglorious, he foresaw the deep disgrace,
Whose foul example should in ruin end,
And even to latest times our baffled arms attend,

Unless the captive youth in servile chains
Should fall unpitied. In the Punic fanes
Have I not seen, the patriot captain cried,
The Roman ensigns fix'd in monumental pride?

I saw our arms resign'd without a wound;
Our free-born citizens in fetters bound;
The gates of Carthage open, and the plain,
Late by our war laid waste, with culture cloth'd again.

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Ransom'd, no doubt, with nobler sense of fame
The soldier shall return—Ye purchase shame.
When the fair fleece imbibes the dyer's stain,
Its native colour lost it never shall regain,

And valour, failing in the soldier's breast,
Scorns to resume what cowardice possess'd.
When from the toils escap'd the hind shall turn
Fierce on her hunters, he the prostrate foe may spurn

In second fight, who felt the fetters bind
His arms enslav'd; who tamely hath resign'd
His sword unstain'd with blood; who might have died,
Yet on a faithless foe, with abject soul, relied;

Who for his safety mix'd poor terms of peace
Even with the act of war; O foul disgrace!
O Carthage, now with rival glories great,
And on the ruins rais'd of Rome's dejected state!

The hero spoke; and from his wedded dame
And infant-children turn'd, oppress with shame
Of his fallen state; their fond embrace repell'd,
And sternly on the earth his manly visage held,

Till, by his unexampled counsel sway'd,
Their firm decree the wavering senate made;
Then, while his friends the tears of sorrow shed,
Amidst the weeping throng the glorious exile sped.

Nor did he not the cruel tortures know,
Vengeful, prepar'd by a barbarian foe;
Yet, with a countenance serenely gay,
He turn'd aside the crowd, who fondly press'd his stay;

As if, when wearied by some client's cause,
After the final sentence of the laws,
Cheerful he hasted to some calm retreat,
To taste the pure delights that bless the rural seat.

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ODE VI.

TO THE ROMANS.

THOUGH guiltless of your fathers' crimes,
Roman, 'tis thine, to latest times,
The vengeance of the gods to bear,
Till you their awful domes repair,
Profan'd with smoke their statues raise,
And bid the sacred altars blaze.
That you the powers divine obey,
Boundless on earth extends your sway;
From hence your future glories date,
From hence expect the hand of Fate.
Th' offended gods, in horrors dire,
On sad Hesperia pour'd their ire:
The Parthian squadrons twice repell'd
Our inauspicious powers, and quell'd
Our boldest efforts, while they sho
With spoils from conquer'd Rom
The Dacians, whose unerring
Can wing with death the p
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Her love no nice distinction knows,
But round the wandering pleasure throws,
Careless to hide the bold delight
In darkness and the shades of night.
Nor does she need the thin disguise;
The conscious husband bids her rise,
When some rich factor courts her charms,
And calls the wanton to his arms,
Then, prodigal of wealth and fame,
Profusely buys the costly shame.
  Not such the youth, of such a strain,
Who dyed with Punic gore the main;
Who Pyrrhus' flying war pursu'd,
Antiochus the Great subdu'd,
And taught that terror of the field,
The cruel Hannibal, to yield:
But a rough race, inur'd to toil,
With heavy spade to turn the soil,
And by a mother's will severe
To fell the wood, and homeward bear
The ponderous load, even when the sun
His downward course of light had run,
And from the western mountain's head
His changing shadows lengthening spread,
Unyok'd the team, with toil opprest,
And gave the friendly hour of rest.
  What feels not Time's consuming rage?
More vicious than their fathers' age
Our sires begot the present race,
Of manners impious, bold and base;
And yet, with crimes to us unknown,
Our sons shall mark the coming age their own.

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ODE VII.

TO ASTERIE.

AH! why does Asterie thus weep for the youth
Of constancy faithful, of honour and truth,
Whom the first kindly zephyrs, that breathe o'er the spring,
Enrich'd with the wares of Bithynia shall bring?
Driven back from his course by the tempests, that rise
When stars of mad lustre rule over the skies,
At Oricum now poor Gyges must stay,
Where sleepless he weeps the cold winter away;
While his landlady Chloë, in sorrow of heart,
Bids her envoy of love exert all his art,
Who tells him how Chloë, unhappy the dame!
Deep sighs for your lover, and burns in your flame.
He tells him how Prœtus, deceiv'd by his wife,
Attempted, ah dreadful! Bellerophon's life,
And urg'd by false crimes, how he sought to destroy
The youth for refusing, too chastely, the joy:
How Peleus was almost dispatch'd to the dead,
While the lovely Magnessian abstemious he fled.
Then he turns every tale, and applies it with art,
To melt down his virtue, and soften his heart;
But constant and heart-whole young Gyges appears,
And deafer than rocks the tale-teller hears.
Then, fair-one, take heed, lest Enipeus should prove
A little too pleasing, and tempt thee to love;
And though without rival he shine in the course,
To rein the fierce steed though unequal his force,
Tho' matchless the swiftness with which he divides,
In crossing the Tiber, the rough-swelling tides,
Yet shut the fond door at evening's first shade,
Nor look down to the street at the soft serenade;
Or if cruel he call thee in love-sighing strain,
Yet more and more cruel be sure to remain.

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ODE VIII.

TO MÆCENAS.

THE Greek and Roman languages are thine,
Their hallow'd customs, and their rites divine;
And well you might the flowery wreaths admire,
The fragrant incense, and the sacred fire,
Rais'd on the living turf, to hail the day
To which the married world their homage pay.
When on my head a tree devoted fell,
And almost crush'd me to the shades of hell,
Grateful I vow'd to him, who rules the vine,
A joyous banquet, while beneath his shrine
A snow-white goat should bleed; and when the year
Revolving bids this festal morn appear,
We'll pierce a cask with mellow juice replete,
Mellow'd with smoke since Tullus rul'd the state.
Come then, Mæcenas, and for friendship's sake,
A friend preserv'd, a hundred bumpers take.
Come drink the watchful tapers up to day,
While noise and quarrels shall be far away.
No more let Rome your anxious thoughts engage,
The Dacian falls beneath the victor's rage,
The Medes in civil wars their arms employ,
Inglorious wars! each other to destroy;
Our ancient foes, the haughty sons of Spain,
At length, indignant, feel the Roman chain;
With bows unbent the hardy Scythians yield,
Resolv'd to quit the long-disputed field.
No more the public claims thy pious fears:
Be not too anxious then with private cares,
But seize the gifts the present moment brings,
Those fleeting gifts, and leave severer things.

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ODE IX.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN HORACE AND LYDIA.

Horace.

WHILE I was pleasing to your arms,
Nor any youth, of happier charms,
Thy snowy bosom blissful press'd,
Not Persia's king like me was blest.

Lydia.

While for no other fair you burn'd,
Nor Lydia was for Chloë scorn'd,
What maid was then so blest as thine?
Not Ilia's fame could equal mine.

Horace.

Now Chloë reigns; her voice and lyre
Melt down the soul to soft desire;
Nor will I fear even death, to save
Her dearer beauties from the grave.

Lydia.

My heart young Calaïs inspires,
Whose bosom glows with mutual fires,
For whom I twice would die with joy,
If death would spare the charming boy.

Horace.

Yet what if Love, whose bands we broke,
Again should tame us to the yoke;
Should I shake off bright Chloë's chain,
And take my Lydia home again?

Lydia.

Though he exceed in beauty far
The rising lustre of a star;
Though light as cork thy fancy strays,
Thy passions wild as angry seas,
When vex'd with storms; yet gladly I
With thee would live, with thee would die.

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ODE X.

TO LYCE.

THOUGH you drank the deep stream of Tanaïs icy,
The wife of some barbarous blockhead, O Lyce,
Yet your heart might relent to expose me reclin'd
At your cruel-shut door to the rage of the wind.
Hark, your gate! how it creaks! how the grove, planted round
Your beautiful villa, re-bellows the sound!
How Jupiter numbs all the regions below,
And glazes with crystal the fleeces of snow!
Away with these humours of pride and disdain,
To Venus ungrateful, to Cupid a pain,
Lest while by the pulley you raise to the top,
Your rope should run back, and your bucket should drop.
No sprightly Tyrrhenian begot thee a prude,
Another Penelope, harsh to be woo'd.
O, though neither presents, nor vow-sighing strain,
Nor violet painting the cheek of thy swain,
Nor thy husband, who gives up his heart for a ditty
To a song-singing wench, can provoke thee to pity;
Though like the hard oak you're to softness inclin'd,
And milder than all of the serpentine kind,
Yet think not this side can for ever sustain
Thy threshold hard-hearted, and sky-falling rain.

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ODE XI.

TO MERCURY.

O THOU, by whose harmonious aid
Amphion's voice the listening stones could lead:
And sweetest shell of power to raise,
On seven melodious strings, thy various lays;
Not vocal, when you first were found,
But of a simple and ungrateful sound;
Now tun'd so sweetly to the ear,
That gods and men with sacred rapture hear;
Oh! thou inspire the melting strain
To charm my Lyde's obstinate disdain,
Who like a filly o'er the field
With playful spirit bounds, and fears to yield
To hand of gentlest touch, or prove,
Wild as she is, the joys of wedded love.
'Tis yours, with all their beasts of prey,
To bid the forests move, and powerful stay
The rapid stream. The dog of hell,
Immense of bulk, to thee soft-soothing fell,
And suppliant bow'd, though round his head
His hundred snakes their guardian horrors spread;
Baleful his breath though fiery glow'd,
And from his three-tongued jaws fell poison flow'd.
Ixion, of his pains beguil'd,
And Tityos, with unwilling pleasure, smil'd;
Dry stood their urn, while with soft strain
You sooth'd the labours of the virgin train.
Let Lyde hear, what pains, decreed,
Though late, in death attend the direful deed.
There doom'd to fill, unceasing task!
With idle toil, an ever-streaming cask;
Impious, who in the hour of rest
Could plunge their daggers in a husband's breast.
Yet worthy of the nuptial flame,
And nobly meriting a deathless name,

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Of many, one untainted maid,
Gloriously false, her perjur'd sire betray'd.
Thus to her youthful lord——Arise;
Awake, lest sleep eternal close thine eyes;
Eternal sleep: and ah! from whom
You little dreaded the relentless doom.
Oh! fly, my lord, this wrathful sire;
Far from my sisters fly, those sisters dire,
Who riot in their husbands' blood,
As lionesses rend their panting food;
While I, to such fell deeds a foe,
Nor bind thee here, nor strike the fatal blow.
Me let my father load with chains,
Or banish to Numidia's farthest plains:
My crime, that I, a loyal wife,
In mercy spar'd a wretched husband's life.
While Venus, and the shades of night
Protect thee, speed, by sea or land, thy flight;
May every happy omen wait
To guide thee through this gloomy hour of Fate!
Yet not forgetful of my doom,
Engrave thy grateful sorrows on my tomb.

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ODE XII.

TO NEOBULE.

UNHAPPY the maidens forbidden to prove
The bumper's full joy, or the raptures of love;
Unhappy the girls, who are destin'd to hear
The tedious rebukes of old uncles severe.
Cytherea's wing'd son now bids thee resign
The toils of Minerva, the spinster divine;
For now, Neobule, with other desires
The brightness of Hebrus thy bosom inspires;
When he rises with vigour from Tiber's rough waves,
Where the oil of his labours athletic he laves,
Like Bellerophon skilful to rein the fierce steed,
At cuffs never conquer'd, nor out-stripp'd in speed,
And dextrous, with darts never flying in vain,
To wound the light stag bounding over the plain,
Or active and valiant the boar to surprise,
Transfix'd with his spear, as in covert he lies.

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ODE XIII.

TO THE FOUNTAIN BANDUSIA.

FOUNTAIN, whose waters far surpass
The shining face of polish'd glass,
To thee, the goblet, crown'd with flowers,
Grateful the rich libation pours;
A goat, whose horns begin to spread,
And bending arm his swelling head,
Whose bosom glows with young desires,
Which war or kindling love inspires,
Now meditates his blow in vain,—
His blood shall thy fair fountain stain.
When the fierce dog-star's fervid ray
Flames forth, and sets on fire the day,
To vagrant flocks, that range the field,
You a refreshing coolness yield;
Or to the labour-wearied team
Pour forth the freshness of thy stream.'
Soon shalt thou flow a noble spring,
While in immortal verse I sing
The oak, that spreads thy rocks around,
From whence thy babbling waters bound.

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ODE XIV.

ON THE RETURN OF AUGUSTUS FROM SPAIN.

THY prince, O Rome, who foreign realms
Explor'd like Jove's immortal son,
Fearless to search the laurel wreath
By death and glorious daring won,
Victorious comes from farthest Spain,
To Rome and all his guardian gods again.

Let her, who to her arms receives
With joy her own, her laurel'd spouse,
Her private sacrifice perform'd,
Pay to just Heaven her public vows,
And let the fair Octavia lead
The matron-train in suppliant veils array'd;

The matron-train, to whose glad arms
Their sons, with conquest crown'd, return;
And you, fair youth, whose pious tears
Your slaughter'd sires and husbands mourn,
This day at least your griefs restrain,
And luckless from ill-omen'd words abstain.

This day, with truly festal joy,
Shall drive all gloomy cares away;
For, while imperial Cæsar holds
O'er the glad Earth his awful sway,
Nor fear of death from foreign arms,
Or civil rage, my dauntless soul alarms.

Boy, bring us essence, bring us crowns;
Pierce me a cask of ancient date,
Big with the storied Marsian war,
And with its glorious deeds replete,
If yet one jovial cask remain
Since wandering Spartacus o'erswept the plain.

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Invite Neæra to the feast,
  Who sweetly charms the listening ear,
And bid the fair-one haste to bind
  In careless wreaths her essenc'd hair;
But should her porter bid you stay,
Leave the rough, surly rogue, and come away.

When hoary age upon our heads
  Pours down its chilling weight of snows,
No more the breast with anger burns,
  No more with amorous heat it glows:
Such treatment Horace would not bear,
When warm with youth, when Plancus fill'd the consul's chair.

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ODE XV.

TO CHLORIS.

THOU poor man's incumbrance, thou rake of a wife,
At length put an end to this infamous life;
Now near thy long home, to be rank'd with the shades,
Give over to frisk it with buxom young maids,
And, furrow'd with wrinkles, profanely to shroud
Those bright constellations with age's dark cloud.
What Pholoë well, with a decency free,
Might practise, sits aukward, O Chloris, on thee.
Like her, whom the timbrel of Bacchus arouses,
Thy daughter may better lay siege to the houses
Of youthful gallants, while she wantonly gambols,
Of Nothus enamour'd, like a goat in its rambles;
The spindle, the distaff, and wool-spinning thrifty,
Not musical instruments, fit thee at fifty,
Nor roses impurpled enriching the breeze,
Nor hogsheads of liquor drunk down to the lees.

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ODE XVI.

TO MÆCENAS.

OF watchful dogs an odious ward
Might well one hapless virgin guard,
When in a tower of brass immur'd,
And by strong gates of oak secur'd,
Although by mortal gallants lewd
With all their midnight arts pursu'd,
Had not great Jove and Venus fair
Laugh'd at her father's fruitless care;
For well they knew no fort could hold
Against a god transform'd to gold.
Stronger than thunder's winged force
All-powerful gold can speed its course,
Through watchful guards its passage make,
And loves through solid walls to break:
From gold the overwhelming woes,
That crush'd the Grecian augur, rose;
Philip with gold through cities broke,
And rival monarchs felt his yoke;
Captains of ships to gold are slaves,
Though fierce as their own winds and waves.
Yet anxious care, and thirst of more,
Attend the still increasing store.
While you in humble rank appear,
Gracing the knighthood that you wear,
By your example taught, I dread
To raise the far conspicuous head.
The more we to ourselves deny,
The more the gods our wants supply.
Far from the quarters of the great,
Happy, though naked, I retreat,
And to th' unwishing few with joy
A blest and bold deserter fly,
Possest of what the great despise,
In real, richer pomp I rise,

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Than if, from fair Apulia's plain,
I stor'd in heaps the various grain,
While, of the wealthy mass secure,
Amidst the rich abundance poor.
  The streamlet, flowing through my ground;
The wood, which a few acres bound;
The little farm of kindly soil,
Nor faithless to its master's toil,
Shall tell the consul, whose domain
Extends o'er Afric's fertile plain,
Though of his envied lot possest,
He ne'er shall be like Horace blest.
  Though nor the fam'd Calabrian bee
Collect its golden sweets for me;
For me no Formian vintage grows,
With mellow'd warmth where Bacchus flows;
Nor on the verdant Gallic mead
My flocks of richer fleeces feed:
Yet am I not with want opprest,
Which vainly seeks the port of rest,
Nor would thy bounteous hand deny
My larger wishes to supply:
But while those wishes I restrain,
Further I stretch my small domain
Than could I distant kingdoms join,
And make united empires mine:
For sure the state of man is such,
They greatly want, who covet much:
Then happy he, whom Heaven has fed
With frugal but sufficient bread.

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ODE XVII.

TO ÆLIUS LAMIA.

ÆLIUS, whose ancient lineage springs
From Lamus, founder of the name
(From whom a sacred line of kings
Shines through the long records of fame,

From whom th'illustrious race arose,
Who first possess'd the Formian towers,
And reign'd where Liris smoothly flows
To fair Marica's marshy shores),

If the old shower-foretelling crow
Croak not her boding note in vain,
To-morrow's eastern storm shall strow
The woods with leaves, with weeds the main.

Then pile the fuel while you may,
And cheer your spirit high with wine;
Give to your slaves one idle day,
And feast upon the fatted swine.

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ODE XVIII.

TO FAUNUS.

FAUNUS, who with eager flame
Chase the Nymphs, thy flying game,
If a tender kid distain,
Each returning year, thy fane,
If with wine we raise the soul
(Social Venus loves the bowl),
If thy consecrated shrine
Smoke with odours,—breath divine!
Gently traverse o'er my bounds,
Gently through my sunny grounds,
Gracious to my fleecy breed,
Sporting o'er the flowery mead.
See my flocks in sportive vein
Frisk it o'er the verdant plain,
When through winter's gloom thy day
Festal shines, the peasants play
On the grassy-matted soil,
Round their oxen, free from toil.
See the wolf forgets his prey,
With my daring lambs to play;
See the forest's bending head
At thy feet its honours shed,
While with joyful foot the swain
Beats the glebe he plough'd with pain.

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ODE XIX.

TO TELEPHUS.

WHEN Inachus reign'd to thee is notorious,
When slain for his country was Codrus the glorious;
When govern'd the monarchs from Peleus descended;
When Troy was besieged, and so bravely defended;
But where the best Chian, or what it may cost ye,
Or how we may warm the long winter and frosty,
Or temper our water with embers so glowing,
Ah! Telephus, here thou art strangely unknowing.
Here's a bumper to Midnight; to Luna's first shining;
A third to our friend in his post of divining.
Come fill up the bowl, then fill up your bumpers,
Let three, or thrice three, be the jovial of numbers.
The poet, enraptur'd, sure never refuses
His brimmers thrice three to his odd-number'd Muses:
But the Graces, in naked simplicity cautious,
Are afraid, more than three might to quarrels debauch us.
Gay frolic, and mirth, to madness shall fire us;
Why breathes not the flute, then, with joy to inspire us?
Why hang on the wall, in silence dolorous,
The soft-swelling pipe and the hautboy sonorous?
I hate all the slaves, who are sparing of labour:
Give us roses abundant, and let our old neighbour,
With his damsel, ill-suited to such an old fellow,
Even burst with his envy to hear us so mellow.
Poor Horace in flames, how slowly consuming!
For Glycera burns, while Chloë the blooming
Her Telephus courts, whose tresses are beaming,
As are the bright rays from Vesperus streaming.

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ODE XX.

TO PYRRHUS.

PYRRHUS, you tempt a danger high,
When you would steal from angry lioness her cubs, and soon shall fly
Inglorious.
What wars of horrid form arise,
Through crowds of lovers when she flies
To seek her boy, and snatch the prize,
Victorious!

You shoot; she whets her tusks to bite;
While he, who sits to judge the fight,
Treads on the palm with foot so white,
Disdainful;
And sweetly floating in the air,
Wanton he spreads his fragrant hair,
Like Ganymede, or Nireus fair,
And vainful.

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ODE XXI.

TO HIS CASK.

GENTLE cask of mellow wine,
And of equal age with mine;
Whether you to broils or mirth,
Or to madding love give birth;
Or the toper's temples steep
Sweetly in ambrosial sleep;
For whatever various use
You preserve the chosen juice,
Worthy of some festal hour,
Now the hoary vintage pour:
Come—Corvinus, guest divine,
Bids me draw the smoothest wine.
Though with science deep imbued,
He, not like a Cynic rude,
Thee despises; for of old
Cato's virtue, we are told,
Often with a bumper glow'd,
And with social raptures flow'd.
You by gentle tortures oft
Melt hard tempers into soft;
You strip off the grave disguise
From the counsels of the wise,
And with Bacchus, blithe and gay,
Bring them to the face of day.
Hope by thee, fair fugitive!
Bids the wretched strive to live;
To the beggar you dispense
Heart and brow of confidence;
Warm'd by thee, he scorns to fear
Tyrant's frown or soldier's spear.
Bacchus boon, and Venus fair
(If she come with cheerful air),

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And the Graces, charming band!
Ever dancing hand in hand;
And the living taper's flame,
Shall prolong thy purple stream,
Till returning Phœbus bright
Puts the lazy stars to flight.

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ODE XXII.

TO DIÁNA.

OF groves and mountains guardian maid,
Invok'd by three mysterious naímes;
Goddess three-form'd, whose willing aid
With gracious pow'r appears display'd,
From death to save our pregnant dames:

To thee I consecrate the pine,
That nodding waves my villa round,
And here, beneath thy hallow'd shrine,
Yearly shall bleed a festal swine,
That meditates the side-long wound.

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ODE XXIII.

TO PHIDYLE.

IF on the new-born moon, with hands supine,
My Phidyle, laborious rustic, prays;
If she with incense, and a ravening swine,
And yearly fruits, her household gods appease,

Nor pestilential storm shall smite her vines,
Nor barren mildew shall her harvests fear;
Nor shall her flocks, when the sad year declines,
Beneath its fruitage, feel th' autumnal air.

Let the devoted herds, that lowing feed
In snow-topt Algidon's high-branching wood,
Or the fair kine of rich Albania, bleed,
And stain the pontiff's hallow'd axe with blood;

The little gods, around thy sacred fire,
No vast profusion of the victim's gore,
But pliant myrtle wreaths alone require,
And fragrant herbs, the pinus, rural store.

A grateful cake, when on the hallow'd shrine
Offer'd by hands that know no guilty stain,
Shall reconcile th' offended powers divine,
When bleeds the pompous hecatomb in vain.

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ODE XXIV.

AGAINST MISERS.

THOUGH of th' unrifled gold possest
Of gorgeous Ind, and Araby the blest;
Though with hewn, massy rocks you raise
Your haughty structures midst th' indignant seas;
Yet, soon as Fate shall round your head,
With adamantine strength, its terrors spread,
Not the dictator's power shall save
Your soul from fear, your body from the grave.
Happy the Scythians, houseless train!
Who roll their vagrant dwellings o'er the plain;
Happy the Getes fierce and brave,
Whom no fix'd laws of property enslave;
While open stands the golden grain,
The free-born fruitage of th' unbounded plain,
Succeeding yearly to the toil,
They plough with equal tasks the public soil.
Not there the guiltless step-dame knows
The baleful draught for orphans to compose;
No wife high-portion'd rules her spouse,
Or trusts her essenced lover's faithless vows;
The lovers there for dowry claim
The father's virtue and the mother's fame,
That dares not break the nuptial tie,
Polluted crime! whose portion is to die.
O that some patriot, wise and good,
Would stop this impious thirst of civil blood,
And joy on statues to behold
His name, the Father of the State, enroll'd!
Oh! let him quell our spreading shame,
And live to latest times an honour'd name.
Though living Virtue we despise,
We follow her, when dead, with envious eyes.
But wherefore do we thus complain,
If Justice wear her awful sword in vain?

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And what are laws, unless obey'd
By the same moral virtues they were made?
If neither burning heats extreme,
Where eastern Phœbus darts his fiercest beam,
Nor where the northern tempest blows,
And freezes down to earth th' eternal snows,
Nor the wild terrors of the main
Can daunt the merchant, and his voyage restrain;
If want, ah dire disgrace! we fear,
From thence with vigour act, with patience bear,
While Virtue's paths untrodden lie,
Those paths that lead us upwards to the sky?
Oh! let us consecrate to Jove
(Rome shall with shouts the pious deed approve)
Our gems, our gold, pernicious store!
Or plunge into the deep the baleful ore.
If you indeed your crimes detest,
Tear forth, uprooted from the youthful breast,
The seeds of each deprav'd desire,
While manly toils a firmer soul inspire.
Nor knows our youth, of noblest race,
To mount the manag'd steed, or urge the chase;
More skill'd in the mean arts of vice,
The whirling troque, or law-forbidden dice:
And yet his worthless heir to raise
To hasty wealth, the perjur'd sire betrays
His partners, co-heirs, and his friends;
But, while in heaps his wicked wealth ascends,
He is not of his wish possest,
There's something wanting still to make him blest.

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ODE XXV.

TO BACCHUS.

WHITHER, in sacred ecstasy,
Bacchus, when full of thy divinity,
Dost thou transport me? To what glades?
What gloomy caverns, unfrequented shades?
In what recesses shall I raise
My voice to sacred Cæsar's deathless praise,
Amid the stars to bid him shine,
Rank'd in the councils of the powers divine?
Some bolder song shall wake the lyre,
And sounds unknown its trembling strings inspire.
Thus o'er the steepy mountain's height,
Starting from sleep, thy priestess takes her flight;
Amaz'd beholds the Thracian snows,
With languid streams where icy Heber flows,
Or Rhodope's high-towering head,
Where frantic choirs barbarian measures tread.
O'er pathless rocks, through lonely groves,
With what delight my raptur'd spirit roves!
O thou, who rul'st the Naiad's breast;
By whom the Bacchanalian maids, possest
With sacred rage inspir'd by thee,
Tear from the bursting glebe th' uprooted tree,
Nothing or low, or mean, I sing,
No mortal sound shall shake the swelling string.
The venturous theme my soul alarms,
But warm'd by thee the thought of danger charms.
When vine-crown'd Bacchus leads the way,
What can his daring votaries dismay?

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ODE XXVI.

TO VENUS.

I LATELY was fit to be call'd upon duty,
And gallantly fought in the service of beauty:
But now crown'd with conquest I hang up my arms,
My harp, that campaign'd it in midnight alarms:
Here fix on this wall, here my ensigns of wars,
By the statue of Venus, my torches and bars,
And arrows, which threaten'd, by Cupid their liege,
War, war on all doors that dare hold out a siege.
O goddess of Cyprus, and Memphis, that know
Nor the coldness or weight of love-chilling snow,
With a high-lifted stroke, yet gently severe,
Avenge me on Chloë, the proud and the fair.

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ODE XXVII.

TO GALATEA.

FIERCE from her cubs the ravening fox,
Or wolf from steep Lanuvian rocks,
Or pregnant bitch, or chattering jay,
Ill-omen'd, guide the wicked on their way;

Serpents, like arrows, sidelong thwart
The road, and make their horses start.
For those I love, with anxious fear
I view the doubtful skies, a prudent seer,

And bid the chanting raven rise
When Phœbus gilds his orient skies,
Ere speeds the shower-boding crow
To lakes, whose languid waters cease to flow.

Happy may Galatea prove,
Nor yet unmindful of our love,
For now no luckless pye prevails,
Nor vagrant crow forbids the swelling sails.

Yet see what storms tumultuous rise,
While prone Orion sweeps the skies.
I know the Adriatic main,
And western winds, perfidiously serene.

But may the rising tempest shake
Our foes, and dreadful o'er them break;
For them the blackening ocean roar,
And angry surges lash the trembling shore.

When on her bull Europa rode,
Nor knew she press'd th' imperial god,
Bold as she was, th' affrighted maid
The rolling monsters of the deep survey'd.

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Late for the rural nymphs she chose
Each flower, a garland to compose,
But now, beneath the gloom of night,
Views nought but seas, and stars of feeble light.

Soon as she touch'd the Cretan shore,
My sire, she cries,—ah! mine no more,
For every pious, tender name
Is madly lost in this destructive flame.

Where am I, wretched and undone?
And shall a single death atone
A virgin's crime? Or do my fears
Deplore the guilty deed with waking tears?

Or am I yet, ah! pure from shame,
Mock'd by a vain, delusive dream?
Could I my springing flowerets leave,
To tempt through length of seas the faithless wave?

While thus with just revenge possest,
How could I tear that monstrous beast!
How could I break, by rage inspir'd,
Those horns, alas! too fondly once admir'd!

Shameless, my father's gods I fly;
Shameless, and yet I fear to die.
Hear me, some gracious, heavenly power,
Let lions fell this naked corse devour.

My cheeks ere hollow wrinkles seize,
Ere yet their rosy bloom decays,
While youth yet rolls its vital flood,
Let tigers fiercely riot in my blood.

But hark! I hear my father cry,
Make haste, unhappy maid, to die,
And if a pendent fate you choose,
Your faithful girdle gives the kindly noose;

Or, if you like a headlong death,
Behold the pointed rocks beneath;

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Or plunge into the rapid wave,
Nor live on haughty tasks, a spinster slave,

Some rude barbarian's concubine,
Born as thou art of royal line.
Here the perfidious-smiling dame
And idle Cupid to the mourner came;

Awhile she rallied with the fair,
Then with a grave and serious air,
Indulge, she cries, thy rage no more,
This odious bull shall yield him to thy power.

Yet sigh no more, but think of love,
For know, thou art the wife of Jove;
Then learn to bear thy future fame,
When earth's wide continent shall boast thy name.

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ODE XXVIII.

TO LYDE.

SAY, what shall I do on the festival day
Of Neptune? Come, Lyde, without more delay,
And broach the good creature, invaulted that lies,
Cast off all reserve, and be merry and wise.
The evening approaches, you see, from yon hill;
And yet, as if Phœbus, though winged, stood still,
You dally to bring us a cup of the best,
Condemn'd, like its consul, ignobly to rest.
With voices alternate, the sea-potent king,
And the Nereids, with ringlets of azure, we'll sing.
From the sweet-sounding shell thy hand shall araise
Latona's, and swift-darting Cynthia's praise.
The gay-smiling goddess of love and delight,
Who rules over Cnidos, and Cyclades bright,
And guiding her swans with a soft silken rein
Revisits her Paphos, shall crown the glad strain.
Then to the good Night, while bumpers elate us,
We'll sing a farewel, and a decent quietus.

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ODE XXIX.

TO MÆCENAS.

DESCENDED from an ancient line,
That once the Tuscan sceptre sway'd,
Haste thee to meet the generous wine,
Whose piercing is for thee delay'd;
For thee the fragrant essence flows,
For thee, Mæcenas, breathes the blooming rose.

From the delights, oh! break away,
Which Tibur's marshy prospect yields,
Nor with unceasing joy survey
Fair Æsula's declining fields;
No more the verdant hills admire
Of Telegon, who kill'd his aged sire.

Instant forsake the joyless feast,
Where appetite in surfeit dies,
And from the towered structure haste,
That proudly threatens to the skies;
From Rome and its tumultuous joys,
Its crowds, and smoke, and opulence, and noise.

Where health-preserving plainness dwells,
Nor sleeps upon the Tyrian dye,
To frugal treats, and humble cells,
With grateful change the wealthy fly.
Such scenes have charm'd the pangs of care,
And smooth'd the clouded forehead of despair.

Andromeda's conspicuous sire
Now darts his hidden beams from far;
The Lion shows his maddening fire,
And barks fierce Procyon's raging star,
While Phœbus, with revolving ray,
Brings back the burnings of the thirsty day.

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Fainting beneath the sweltering heat,
To cooling streams and breezy shades
The shepherd and his flocks retreat,
While rustic Sylvans seek the glades,
Silent the brook its borders laves,
Nor curls one vagrant breath of wind the waves.

But you for Rome's imperial state
Attend with ever-watchful care,
Or, for the world's uncertain fate
Alarm'd, with ceaseless terrors fear;
Anxious what eastern wars impend,
Or what the Scythians in their pride intend.

But Jove, in goodness ever wise,
Hath hid, in clouds of depthless night,
All that in future prospect lies,
Beyond the ken of mortal sight,
And laughs to see vain man oppress
With idle fears, and more than man distress.

Then wisely form the present hour;
Enjoy the bliss that it bestows;
The rest is all beyond our power,
And like the changeful Tiber flows,
Who now beneath his banks subsides,
And peaceful to his native ocean glides:

But when descends a sudden shower
And wild provokes his silent flood,
The mountains hear the torrent roar,
And echoes shake the neighbouring wood,
Then swollen with rage he sweeps away
Uprooted trees, herds, dwellings, to the sea.

Happy the man, and he alone,
Who master of himself can say,
To-day at least hath been my own,
For I have clearly liv'd to-day:
Then let to-morrow's clouds arise,
Or purer suns o'erspread the cheerful skies.

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Not Jove himself can now make void
The joy, that wing'd the flying hour;
The certain blessing once enjoy'd,
Is safe beyond the godhead's power;
Nought can recall the acted scene,
What hath been, spite of Jove himself, hath been.

But Fortune, ever-changing dame,
Indulges her malicious joy,
And constant plays her haughty game,
Proud of her office to destroy;
To-day to me her bounty flows,
And now to others she the bliss bestows.

I can applaud her while she stays;
But if she shake her rapid wings,
I can resign with careless ease
The richest gifts her favour brings,
Then folded lie in virtue's arms,
And honest poverty's undower'd charms.

Though the mast howl beneath the wind,
I make no mercenary prayers,
Nor with the gods a bargain bind
With future vows, and streaming tears,
To save my wealth from adding more
To boundless ocean's avaricious store:

Then in my little barge I'll ride,
Secure amid the foamy wave,
Calm will I stem the threatening tide,
And fearless all its tumults brave;
Even then perhaps some kinder gale,
While the twin stars appear, shall fill my joyful sail.

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ODE XXX.

TO MELPOMENE.

MORE durable than brass, the frame
Which here I consecrate to fame;
Higher than pyramids that rise,
With royal pride, to brave the skies;
Nor years, though numberless the train,
Nor flight of seasons, wasting rain,
Nor winds, that loud in tempests break,
Shall e'er its firm foundation shake.
Nor shall the funeral pyre consume
My fame; that nobler part shall bloom,
With youth unfading shall improve,
While to th' immortal fane of Jove
The Vestal maids, in silent state
Ascending, on the pontiff wait.
With rapid course and deafening waves
Where Aufidus impetuous raves,
And where a poor, enervate stream
From banish'd Daunus takes its name,
O'er warlike realms who fix'd his throne,
Shall Horace, deathless bard, be known,
Who first attempted to inspire
With Grecian sounds the Roman lyre.
With conscious pride, O Muse divine,
Assume the honours justly thine;
With laurel wreaths my head surround,
Such as the god of verse have crown'd.

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ODES.

BOOK IV.

ODE I.

TO VENUS.

AGAIN new tumults fire my breast?
Ah spare me, Venus, let thy suppliant rest.
I am no more, alas! the swain
I was in Cynara's indulgent reign.
Fierce mother of the Loves, no more
Attempt to bend me to thy charming power,
Harden'd with age; but swift repair
Where youth invokes thee with the soothing prayer.
Would you inflame, with young desire,
A bosom worthy of thy purest fire,
To Paulus guide, a welcome guest,
Thy purple swans, and revel in his breast.
Of noble birth, and graceful made,
Nor silent when affliction claims his aid,
He, with a hundred conquering arts,
Shall wave thy banners wide o'er female hearts.
When more successful he shall prove,
And laugh at rivals, who with gifts make love,
Thou in a citron dome shalt stand,
Form'd by the sculptor's animating hand.
There shall th' abundant incense flame,
And thou transported quaff the rising steam;
There shall the powers of music join,
And raise the song with harmony divine;
There shall the youths and virgins pay
To thee their grateful offerings twice a-day,

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Like Salian priests the dance shall lead,
And many a mazy measure round thee tread.
For me, alas! those joys are o'er,
For me the vernal garland blooms no more;
No more the feats of wine I prove,
Nor the delusive hopes of mutual love.
Yet why, ah! fair-one, still too dear,
Steals down my cheek th' involuntary tear?
Or why thus falter o'er my tongue
The words, which once harmonious pour'd along?
Swift through the fields, and flowing streams,
I follow thee in visionary dreams;
Now, now I seize, I clasp thy charms,
And now you burst, ah cruel! from my arms.

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ODE II.

TO ANTONIUS IULUS.

HE, who to Pindar's height attempts to rise,
Like Icarus, with waxen pinions tries
His pathless way, and from the venturous theme
Falling shall leave to azure seas his name.
As when a river, swollen by sudden showers,
O'er its known banks from some steep mountain pours,
So in profound, unmeasurable song
The deep-mouth'd Pindar, foaming, pours along.
Well he deserves Apollo's laurel'd crown,
Whether new words he rolls enrapture'd down
Impetuous through the Dithyrambic strains;
Free from all laws, but what himself ordains;
Whether in lofty tone sublime he sings
The immortal gods, or god-descended kings,
With death deserv'd who smote the Centaurs dire,
And quench'd the fierce Chimæra's breath of fire;
Or whom th' Olympic palm, celestial prize!
Victorious crowns, and raises to the skies,
Wrestler or steed—with honours, that outlive
The mortal fame which thousand statues give;
Or mourns some hapless youth in plaintive lay,
From his fond, weeping bride, ah! torn away;
His manners pure, his courage, and his name,
Snatch'd from the grave, he vindicates to fame.
Thus, when the Theban swan attempts the skies,
A nobler gale of rapture bids him rise;
But like a bee, which through the breezy groves
With feeble wing and idle murmurs roves,
Sits on the bloom, and with unceasing toil
From thyme sweet-breathing culls his flowery spoil;
So I, weak bard! round Tibur's lucid spring,
Of humbler strain laborious verses sing.
'Tis thine with deeper hand to strike the lyre,
When Cæsar shall his raptur'd bard inspire,

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And crown'd with laurel, well-earn'd meed of war,
Drag the fierce Gaul at his triumphal car;
  Than whom the gods ne'er gave, or bounteous Fate,
To human kind a gift more good or great,
Nor from the treasures shall again unfold,
Though time roll backward to his ancient gold.
  Be thine the festal days, the city's joys,
The Forum silenc'd from litigious noise,
The public games for Cæsar safe restor'd,
A blessing oft with pious vows impler'd.
  Then, if my voice can reach the glorious theme;
Then will I sing, amid the loud acclaim—
"Hail, brightest sun; in Rome's fair annals shine;
Cæsar returns—eternal praise be thine."
  As the procession awful moves along,
Let shouts of triumph fill our joyful song;
Repeated shouts of triumph Rome shall raise,
And to the bounteous gods our altars blaze.
  Of thy fair herds twice ten shall grateful bleed,
While I, with pious care, one steerling feed:
Wean'd from the dam, o'er pastures large he roves,
And for my vows his rising youth he proves:
  His horns like Luna's bending fires appear,
When the third night she rises to her sphere;
And, yellow all the rest, one spot there glows
Full in his front, and bright as winter snows.

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ODE III.

TO MELPOMENE.

HE, on whose natal hour the queen
Of verse hath smil'd, shall never grace
The Isthmian gauntlet, or be seen
First in the fam'd Olympic race:
He shall not after toils of war,
And taming haughty monarchs' pride,
With laurel'd brows conspicuous far,
To Jove's Tarpeian temple ride:
But him, the streams which warbling flow
Rich Tibur's fertile vales along,
And shady groves, his haunts, shall know
The master of th' Æolian song.
The sons of Rome, majestic Rome!
Have placed me in the poet's quire,
And Envy, now or dead or dumb,
Forbears to blame what they admire.
Goddess of the sweet-sounding lute,
Which thy harmonious touch obeys,
Who canst the finny race, though mute,
To cygnet's dying accents raise,
Thy gift it is, that all, with ease,
Me prince of Roman lyrics own;
That, while I live, my numbers please,
If pleasing, is thy gift alone.

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ODE IV.

THE PRAISES OF DRUSUS.

As the majestic bird of towering kind,
Who bears the thunder through th' ethereal space
(To whom the monarch of the gods assign'd
Dominion o'er the vagrant, feather'd race,
His faith approv'd, when to the distant skies
From Ida's top he bore the Phrygian prize)

Sprung from his nest, by sprightly youth inspir'd,
Fledg'd, and exulting in his native might,
Novice to toils; but, as the clouds retir'd,
And gentler gales provok'd a bolder flight,
On sailing wings through yielding air explor'd
Unwonted paths, and panted while he soar'd:

Anon to ravage in the fleecy fold,
The glowing ardour of his youthful heart
Pour'd the beak'd foe; now more maturely bold
With talons fierce precipitant to dart
On dragons fell, reluctant in the fray;
Such is his thirst for battle, and for prey:

Or as a lion through the forest stalks,
Wean'd by his tawny dam from milky food;
A goat descries him from her flowery walks,
First doom'd to stain his youthful jaws with blood:
So Drusus look'd tremendous to his foes,
Beneath the frozen height of Alpine snows.

The Rhœtian bands beheld him such in war:
Those daring bands, who with triumphant joy
Were wont to spread their baneful terrors far,
Tam'd by the conduct of the martial boy,
Felt what true courage could achieve, when led
By bright example, and by virtue bred;

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Felt how Augustus with paternal mind
Fir'd the young Heroes to heroic deeds,
The brave and good are copies of their kind:
In steers laborious, and in generous steeds
We trace their sires: nor can the bird of Jove,
Intrepid, fierce, beget th' unwarlike dove.

Yet sage instructions, to refine the soul
And raise the genius, wondrous aid impart,
Conveying, inward as they purely roll,
Strength to the mind, and vigour to the heart:
When morals fail, the stains of vice disgrace
The fairest honours, and the noblest race.

How much the grandeur of thy rising state
Owes to the Heroes, Rome imperial, say;
Witness Metaurus, and the dismal fate
Of vanquish'd Asdrubal, and that glad day,
Which first auspicious, as the darkness fled,
O'er Latium's face a tide of glory shed;

Resistless in his rage, before that day
The Carthaginian with vindictive ire
Through our fair cities urg'd his cruel way,
As through the pitchy pines destructive fire
Devours its course; or as when Eurus raves,
And howling rides the mad Sicilian waves.

The Roman youth, improving by their toils,
With better fate now wield the vengeful sword,
And see those temples, which were once the spoils
Of Tyrian rapine, to their gods restor'd;
When faithless Hannibal at length express'd
The boding sorrows of his anxious breast:

"Like stags, of coward kind, the destin'd prey
Of ravening wolves, we unprovok'd defy
Those, whom to baffle is our fairest play,
The richest triumph we can boast, to fly.
For mark that race, which to the Latian shore
Their gods, their sons, their sires, intrepid bore.

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"That race, long tost upon the Tuscan waves,
Are like an oak upon the woody top
Of shaded Algidus, embrown'd with leaves,
Which, as keen axes its green honours lop,
Through wounds, through losses no decay can feel,
Collecting strength and spirit from the steel.

"Not Hydra stronger, when dismember'd, rose
Against Alcmena's much-enduring son,
Grieving to find, from his repeated blows,
The foe redoubled, and his toil begun;
Nor Colchis teem'd, nor Echionian Thebes
A feller monster from their bursting glebes.

"In ocean plunge them, they emerge more bright;
At arms oppose them in the dusty field,
With routed squadrons they renew the fight,
And force your yet-unbroken troops to yield,
And battles wage, to be the future boast
Of their proud consorts o'er our vanquish'd host.

"To lofty Carthage I no more shall send
Vaunts of my deeds, and heralds of my fame;
My boundless hopes, alas! are at an end,
With all the flowing fortune of our name:
Those boundless hopes, that flowing fortune, all
Are dash'd, and buried in my brother's fall."

The Claudian race, those favourites of the skies,
No toil shall damp, no fortitude withstand;
Superior they to difficulties rise,
Whom Jove protects with an indulgent hand;
Whom cautious cares, preventing wiles afar,
Guide through the perils of tumultuous war.

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ODE V.

TO AUGUSTUS.

PROPITIOUS to the sons of Earth
(Best guardian of the Roman state)
The heavenly powers beheld thy birth,
And form'd thee glorious, good and great;
Rome and her holy fathers cry, Thy stay
Was promis'd short, ah! wherefore this delay?

Come then, auspicious prince, and bring
To thy long gloomy country, light,
For in thy countenance the spring
Shines forth to cheer thy people's sight:
Then hasten thy return; for, thou away,
Nor lustre has the sun, nor joy the day.

As a fond mother views with fear
The terrors of the rolling main,
While envious winds, beyond his year,
From his lov'd home her son detain;
To the good gods with fervent prayer she cries,
And catches every omen as it flies;

Then anxious listens to the roar
Of winds, that loudly sweep the sky;
Nor, fearful, from the winding shore
Can ever turn her longing eye:
Smit with as faithful and as fond desires,
Impatient Rome her absent lord requires.

Safe by thy cares her oxen graze,
And yellow Ceres clothes her fields;
The sailor ploughs the peaceful seas,
And Earth her rich abundance yields;
While, nobly conscious of unsullied fame,
Fair honour dreads th' imputed sense of blame.

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By thee our wedded dames are pure
From foul adultery's embrace;
The conscious father views secure
His own resemblance in his race:
Thy chaste example quells the spotted deed,
And to the guilt thy punishments succeed.

Who shall the faithless Parthian dread,
The freezing armies of the north,
The enormous youth, to battle bred,
Whom horrid Germany brings forth?
Who shall regard the war of cruel Spain,
If Cæsar live secure, if Cæsar reign?

Safe in his vineyard toils the hind,
Weds to the widow'd elm his vine,
Till the sun sets his hill behind,
Then hastens joyful to his wine,
And in his gayer hours of mirth implores
Thy godhead to protect and bless his stores.

To thee he chants the sacred song,
To thee the rich libation pours;
Thee, plac'd his household gods among,
With solemn, daily prayer adores:
So Castor and great Hercules of old
Were with her gods by grateful Greece enroll'd.

Gracious and good, beneath thy reign
May Rome her happy hours employ,
And grateful hail thy just domain
With pious hymns and festal joy:
Thus, with the rising sun we sober pray,
Thus, in our wine beneath his setting ray.

[*The* SIXTH ODE *will be found in "The Secular Poem:" see the first "Chorus of Youths and Virgins," and the succeeding "Hymn to Apollo."*]

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ODE VII.

TO TORQUATUS.

THE snow dissolves, the field its verdure spreads,
The trees high wave in air their leafy heads;
Earth feels the change; the rivers calm subside,
And smooth along their banks decreasing glide;
The elder Grace, with her fair sister-train,
In naked beauty dances o'er the plain.
The circling hours, that swiftly wing their way,
And in their flight consume the smiling day;
Those circling hours, and all the various year,
Convince us, nothing is immortal here.
In vernal gales cold winter melts away;
Soon wastes the spring in summer's burning ray;
Yet summer dies in autumn's fruitful reign,
And slow-pac'd winter soon returns again.
The moon renews her orb with growing light;
But when we sink into the depths of night,
Where all the good, the rich, the brave are laid,
Our best remains are ashes and a shade.
Who knows that heaven, with ever-bounteous power,
Shall add to-morrow to the present hour?
The wealth you give to pleasure and delight,
Far from thy ravening heir shall speed its flight;
But soon as Minos, thron'd in awful state,
Shall o'er thee speak the solemn words of Fate,
Nor virtue, birth, nor eloquence divine,
Shall bid the grave its destin'd prey resign:
Nor chaste Diana from infernal night
Could bring her modest favourite back to light;
And hell-descending Theseus strove in vain
To break his amorous friend's Lethæan chain.

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ODE VIII.

TO CENSORINUS.

WITH liberal heart to every friend
A bowl or caldron would I send;
Or tripods, which the Grecians gave,
As rich rewards to heroes brave;
Nor should the meanest gift be thine,
If the rich works of art were mine,
By Scopas or Parrhasius wrought,
With animating skill who taught
The shapeless stone with life to glow,
Or bad the breathing colours flow,
To imitate, in every line,
The form or human or divine.
But I nor boast the curious store,
And you nor want, nor wish for more;
'Tis yours the joys of verse, to know,
Such joys as Horace can bestow,
While I can vouch my present's worth,
And call its every virtue forth.
Nor columns, which the public raise,
Engrav'd with monumental praise,
By which the breath of life returns
To heroes sleeping in their urns;
Nor Hannibal, when swift he fled,
His threats retorted on his head;
Nor impious Carthage wrapt in flame,
From whence great Scipio gain'd a name,
Such glories round him could diffuse
As the Calabrian poet's muse;
And should the bard his aid deny,
Thy worth shall unrewarded die.
Had envious silence left unsung
The child from Mars and Ilia sprung,
How had we known the hero's fame,
From whom the Roman empire came?

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The poet's favour, voice, and lays,
Could Æacus from darkness raise,
Snatch'd from the Stygian gulfs of hell,
Among the blissful isles to dwell.
  The Muse forbids the brave to die,
The Muse enthrones him in the sky:
Alcides, thus, in heaven is plac'd,
And shares with Jove th' immortal feast;
Thus the twin-stars have power to save
The shatter'd vessel from the wave,
And vine-crown'd Bacchus with success
His jovial votaries can bless.

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ODE IX.

TO LOLLIUS.

WHILE with the Grecian bards I vie,
And raptur'd tune the social string,
Think not the song shall ever die,
Which with no vulgar art I sing,
Though born where Aufid rolls his sounding stream,
In lands far distant from poetic fame.

What though the Muse her Homer throues
High above all th' immortal choir,
Nor Pindar's rapture she disowns,
Nor hides the plaintive Cæan lyre:
Alcæus strikes the tyrant's soul with dread,
Nor yet is grave Stesichorus unread.

Whatever old Anacreon sung,
However tender was the lay,
In spite of Time is ever young,
Nor Sappho's amorous flames decay;
Her living songs preserve their charming art;
Her love still breathes the passions of her heart.

Helen was not the only fair,
By an unhappy passion fir'd,
Who the lewd ringlets of the hair
Of an adulterous beau admir'd;
Court arts, gold lace, and equipage have charms
To tempt weak woman to a stranger's arms.

Nor first from Teucer's vengeful bow
The feather'd death unerring flew,
Nor was the Greek the single foe
Whose rage ill-fated Ilion knew
Greece had with heroes fill'd th' embattled plain,
Worthy the Muse in her sublimest strain.

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Nor Hector first transported heard
With fierce delight the war's alarms,
Nor brave Deïphobus appear'd
Amid the tented field in arms,
With glorious ardour prodigal of life,
To guard a darling son and faithful wife.

Before great Agamemnon reign'd,
Reign'd kings as great as he, and brave,
Whose huge ambition's now contain'd
In the small compass of a grave;
In endless night they sleep, unwept, unknown,
No bard had they to make all time their own.

In earth if it forgotten lies,
What is the valour of the brave?
What difference, when the coward dies,
And sinks in silence to his grave?
Nor, Lollius, will I not thy praise proclaim,
But from oblivion vindicate thy fame.

Nor shall its livid power conceal
Thy toils—how glorious to the state!
How constant to the public weal
Through all the doubtful turns of fate!
Thy steady soul, by long experience found
Erect alike, when Fortune smil'd or frown'd.

Villains, in public rapine bold,
Lollius, the just avenger, dread,
Who never by the charms of gold,
Shining seducer, was misled:
Beyond thy year such virtue shall extend,
And death alone thy consulate shall end.

Perpetual magistrate is he,
Who keeps strict Justice full in sight;
With scorn rejects th' offender's fee,
Nor weighs convenience against right;
Who bids the crowd at awful distance gaze,
And Virtue's arms victoriously displays.

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Not he, of wealth immense possest,
  Tasteless who piles his massy gold,
Among the number of the blest
  Should have his glorious name enroll'd;
He better claims the glorious name, who knows
With wisdom to enjoy what heaven bestows:

Who knows the wrongs of want to bear,
  Even in its lowest, last extreme;
Yet can with conscious virtue fear,
  Far worse than death, a deed of shame;
Undaunted, for his country or his friend,
To sacrifice his life—O glorious end!

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ODE X.

TO LIGURINUS.

O CRUEL still, and vain of beauty's charms,
When wintry age thy insolence disarms;
When fall those locks that on thy shoulders play,
And youth's gay roses on thy cheeks decay;
When that smooth face shall manhood's roughness wear,
And in your glass another form appear;
Ah why, you'll say, do I now vainly burn,
Or with my wishes not my youth return?

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ODE XI.

TO PHYLLIS.

PHYLLIS, I have a cask of wine
Mellow'd by summers more than nine;
With living wreaths to crown our heads
The parsley's vivid verdure spreads;
To bind your hair the ivy twines,
With plate my cheerful sideboard shines:
With vervain chaste an altar bound,
Now thirsts for blood; the victim's crown'd.
All hands employ'd; with busy haste
My boys and girls prepare our feast;
Trembling the pointed flames arise,
The smoke rolls upward to the skies.
But why this busy, festal care?
This invitation to my fair?
This day the smiling month divides,
O'er which the sea-born queen presides;
Sacred to me, and due to mirth,
As the glad hour that gave me birth;
For, when this happy morn appears,
Mæcenas counts a length of years
To roll in bright succession round,
With every joy and blessing crown'd.
Gay Telephus exults above
The humble fortunes of thy love;
A rich and buxom maid detains
His captive heart in willing chains.
The youth destroy'd by heavenly fire
Forbids ambition to aspire;
And Pegasus, who scorn'd to bear
His earth-born rider through the air,
A dread example hath supplied
To check the growth of human pride,

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And caution my presumptuous fair
To grasp at things within her sphere.
  Come then, my latest love (for I
Shall never for another die),
Come learn with me to newer lays
Thy voice of harmony to raise.
The soothing song and charming air
Shall lessen every gloomy care.

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ODE XII.

TO VIRGIL.

COMPANIONS of the Spring, the Thracian winds
With kindly breath now drive the bark from shore;
No frost, with hoary hand, the meadow binds,
Nor swoln with winter snow the torrents roar.

The swallow, hapless bird! now builds her nest,
And in complaining notes begins to sing,
That, with revenge too cruelly possest,
Impious she punish'd an incestuous king.

Stretch'd on the springing grass the shepherd swain
His reedy pipe with rural music fills;
The god, who guards his flock, approves the strain,
The god, who loves Arcadia's gloomy hills.

Virgil, 'tis thine with noble youths to feast;
Yet, since the thirsty season calls for wine,
Would you a cup of generous Bacchus taste,
Bring you the odours, and a cask is thine.

Thy little box of spikenard shall produce
A mighty cask, that in the cellar lies;
Big with large hopes shall flow th'inspiring juice,
Powerful to sooth our griefs, and raise our joys.

If pleasures such as these can charm thy soul,
Bring the glad merchandise, with sweets replete;
Nor empty-handed shall you touch the bowl,
Nor do I mean like wealthy folk to treat.

Think on the gloomy pile's funereal flames,
And be no more with sordid lucre blind;
Mix a short folly with thy labour'd schemes;
'Tis joyous folly, that unbends the mind.

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ODE XIII.

TO LYCE.

THE gods, the gods have heard my prayer:
See, Lyce, see that hoary hair,
Yet you a toast would shine:
You impudently drink and joke,
And with a broken voice provoke
Desires no longer thine.

Cupid, who joys in dimple sleek,
Now lies in blooming Chia's cheek,
Who tunes the melting lay;
From blasted oaks the wanton flies,
Scar'd at thy wrinkles, haggard eyes,
And head snow'd o'er with gray.

Nor glowing purple, nor the blaze
Of jewels, can restore the days,
To thee those days of glory,
Which, wafted on the wings of time,
Even from thy birth to beauty's prime,
Recorded stand in story.

Ah! whither is thy Venus fled?
That bloom by nature's cunning spread?
That every graceful art?
Of her, of her, what now remains,
Who breath'd the loves, who charm'd the swains,
And snatch'd me from my heart?

Once happy maid! in pleasing guiles
Who vied with Cynara in smiles,
Ah! tragical survival!
She glorious died in beauty's bloom,
While cruel Fate defers thy doom
To be the raven's rival:

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That youths, in fervent wishes bold,
Not without laughter may behold
A torch, whose early fire
Could every breast with love inflame,
Now faintly spread a sickly gleam,
And in a smoke expire.

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ODE XIV.

TO AUGUSTUS.

HOW shall our holy senate's care,
Or Rome with grateful joy prepare
Thy monumental honours, big with fame,
And in her festal annals eternize thy name?

O thou, where Sol with varied rays
The habitable globe surveys,
Greatest of princes, whose vindictive war
First broke th' unconquer'd Gaul to thy triumphal car!

For when thy legions Drusus led,
How swift the rapid Breuni fled!
The rough Genauni fell, and, rais'd in vain
Tremendous on the Alps, twice overwhelm'd the plain

Their haughty towers. With just success
While the good gods thy battle bless,
Our elder Nero smote with deep dismay
The Rhætians huge of bulk, and broke their firm array.

Conspicuous in the martial strife,
And nobly prodigal of life,
With what prodigious ruins he oppress'd
For glorious liberty the death-devoted breast!

As when the Pleiads rend the skies
In mystic dance, the winds arise,
And work the seas untam'd; such was the force,
With which through spreading fires he spurr'd his foaming horse.

So branching Aufidus, who laves
The Daunian realms, fierce rolls his waves,

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When to the golden labours of the swain
He meditates his wrath, and deluges the plain,

As Claudius, with impetuous might,
Broke through the iron ranks of fight;
From front to rear the bloodless victor sped,
Mow'd down th' embattled field, and wide the slaughter spread.

Thine were his troops, his counsels thine,
And all his guardian powers divine:
For, since the day when Alexandria's port
Open'd, in suppliance low, her desolated court;

When thrice five times the circling sun
His annual course of light had run;
Fortune by this success hath crown'd thy name,
Confirm'd thy glories past, and rais'd thy future fame.

Dread guardian of th' imperial state,
Whose presence rules thy country's fate,
On whom the Medes with awful wonder gaze,
Whom unhous'd Scythians fear, unconquer'd Spain obeys;

The Nile, who hides his sevenfold source,
The Tigris, headlong in his course,
The Danube, and the ocean wild that roars
With monster-bearing waves round Britain's rocky shores:

The fearless Gaul thy name reveres,
Thy voice the rough Iberian hears,
With arms compos'd the fierce Sicambrians yield,
Nor view, with dear delight, the carnage of the field.

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ODE XV.

TO AUGUSTUS.

I WOULD have sung of battles dire
And mighty cities overthrown,
When Phœbus smote me with his lyre,
And warn'd me with an angry tone,
Not to unfold my little sail, or brave
The boundless terrors of the Tyrrhene wave.

Yet will I sing thy peaceful reign,
Which crowns with fruits our happy fields,
And, rent from Parthia's haughty fane,
To Roman Jove his eagles yields;
Augustus bids the rage of war to cease,
And shuts up Janus in eternal peace.

Restrain'd by arts of ancient fame,
Wild License walks at large no more,
Those arts, by which the Latian name,
The Roman strength, th' imperial pow'r,
With awful majesty unbounded spread
To rising Phœbus from his western bed.

While watchful Cæsar guards our age,
Nor civil wrath, nor loud alarms
Of foreign tumults, nor the rage
That joys to forge destructive arms,
And ruin'd cities fills with hostile woes,
Shall e'er disturb, O Rome, thy safe repose.

Nations, who quaff the rapid stream,
Where deep the Danube rolls his wave;
The Parthians, of perfidious fame,
The Getæ fierce, and Seres brave,
And they on Tanaïs who wide extend,
Shall to the Julian laws reluctant bend.

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Our wives and children share our joy,
With Bacchus' jovial blessings gay;
Thus we the festal hours employ,
Thus grateful hail the busy day;
But first with solemn rites the gods adore,
And, like our sires, their sacred aid implore;

Then vocal, with harmonious lays
To Lydian flutes, of cheerful sound,
Attemper'd sweetly, we shall raise
The valiant deeds of chiefs renown'd,
Old Troy, Anchises, and the godlike race
Of Venus, blooming with immortal grace.

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ODES.

BOOK V.

ODE I.

TO MÆCENAS.

WHILE you, Mæcenas, dearest friend,
Would Cæsar's person with your own defend;
And Antony's high-towered fleet
With light Liburnian galleys fearless meet,
What shall forsaken Horace do,
Whose every joy of live depends on you?
With thee, 'tis happiness to live,
And life, without thee, can no pleasure give.
Shall I th' unkind command obey,
And idly waste my joyless hours away?
Or, as becomes the brave, embrace
The glorious toil, and spurn the thoughts of peace?
I will; and over Alpine snow,
Or savage Caucasus, intrepid go;
Or follow, with undaunted breast,
Thy dreadful warfare to the furthest West.
You ask, what aid I can afford,
A puny warrior; novice to the sword.
Absence, my lord, increases fear;
The danger lessens when the friend is near:
Thus, if the mother-bird forsake
Her unfledg'd young, she dreads the gliding snake
With deeper agonies afraid,
Not that her presence could afford them aid.

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With cheerful heart will I sustain,
To purchase your esteem, this dread campaign:
Not that my ploughs, with heavier toil,
Or with a larger team, may turn my soil;
Not that my flocks, when Sirius reigns,
May browse the verdure of Lucania's plains;
Not that my villa shall extend
To where the walls of Tusculum ascend.
Thy bounty largely hath supplied,
Even with a lavish hand, my utmost pride;
Nor will I meanly wish for more,
Tasteless in earth to hide the sordid store,
Like an old miser in the play,
Or like a spendthrift squander it away.

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ODE II.

THE PRAISES OF A COUNTRY LIFE.

LIKE the first mortals blest is he,
From debts, and usury, and business free,
With his own team who ploughs the soil,
Which grateful once confess'd his father's toil.
The sounds of war nor break his sleep,
Nor the rough storm, that harrows up the deep;
He shuns the courtier's haughty doors,
And the loud science of the bar abjures.
Sometimes his marriagable vines
Around the lofty bridegroom elm he twines;
Or lops the vagrant boughs away,
Ingrafting better as the old decay;
Or in the vale with joy surveys
His lowing herd safe-wandering as they graze;
Or careful stores the flowing gold
Prest from the hive, or sheers his tender fold;
Or when, with various fruits o'erspread,
The mellow Autumn lifts his beauteous head,
His grafted pears or grapes, that vie
With the rich purple of the Tyrian dye,
Grateful he gathers, and repays
His guardian gods upon their festal days;
Sometimes beneath an ancient shade,
Or on the matted grass supinely laid,
Where pours the mountain stream along,
And feather'd warblers chant the soothing song;
Or where the lucid fountain flows,
And with its murmurs courts him to repose.
But when the rain and snows appear,
And wintry Jove loud thunders o'er the year,
With hounds he drives into the toils
The foaming boar, and triumphs in his spoils;
Or for the greedy thrush he lays
His nets, and with delusive baits betrays;

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Artful he sets the springing snare,
To catch the stranger crane, or timorous hare.
Thus happy, who would stoop to prove
The pains, the wrongs, and injuries of love?
But if a chaste and virtuous wife
Assist him in the tender cares of life;
Of sun-burnt charms, but honest fame,
(Such as the Sabine, or Apulian dame);
Fatigu'd when homeward he returns,
The sacred fire with cheerful lustre burns;
Or if she milk her swelling kine,
Or in their folds his happy flocks confine;
While unbought dainties crown the feast,
And luscious wines from this year's vintage prest;
No more shall curious oysters please;
Or fish, the luxury of foreign seas
(If eastern tempests, thundering o'er
The wintry wave, shall drive them to our shore);
Or wild-fowl of delicious taste,
From distant climates brought to crown the feast,
Shall e'er so grateful prove to me,
As olives gather'd from their unctuous tree,
And herbs that love the flowery field,
And cheerful health with pure digestion yield;
Or fatling, on the festal day,
Or kid just rescued from some beast of prey.
Amid the feast how joys he to behold
His well-fed flocks home hasting to their fold!
Or see his labour'd oxen bow
Their languid necks, and drag th' inverted plough,
At night his numerous slaves to view
Round his domestic gods their mirth pursue!
The usurer spoke: determin'd to begin
A country-life, he calls his money in,
But, ere the moon was in her wane,
The wretch had put it out to use again.

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ODE III.

TO MÆCENAS.

IF parricide ever, in horrors more dire,
With impious right hand shall strangle his sire,
On garlick, than hemlock more rank, let him feed:
O stomach of mowers to digest such a weed!
What poison is this in my bosom so glowing?
Have I swallow'd the gore of a viper unknowing?
Canidia perhaps hath handled the feast,
And with witchery hellish the banquet hath drest.
With this did Medea her lover besmear,
Young Jason, beyond all his Argonauts fair;
The stench was so strong, that it tam'd to the yoke
The brass-footed bulls breathing fire and smoke.
On the gown of Creüsa its juices she shed,
Then on her wing'd dragon in triumph she fled.
Not such the strong vapour that burns up the plains,
When the dog-star in anger triumphantly reigns;
Not the shirt of Alcides, that well-labour'd soldier,
With flames more envenom'd burn'd into his shoulder.
May the girl of your heart, if ever you taste,
Facetious Mæcenas, so baleful a feast,
Her hand o'er your kisses, oh, may she bespread,
And lie afar off on the stock of the bed!

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ODE IV.

As wolves and lambs by nature disagree,
So is my hatred firm to thee;
Thou wretch, whose back with flagrant whips is torn;
Whose legs with galling fetters worn;
Though wealth thy native insolence inflame,
A scoundrel ever is the same.
While you your thrice three ells of gown display,
And stalk along the sacred way,
Observe the free-born indignation rise,
Mark! how they turn away their eyes:
This wretch, they cry, with public lashing flay'd,
Till even the beadle loath'd his trade,
Now ploughs his thousand acres of demesne,
And wears the pavement with his train;
Now on the foremost benches sits, in spite
Of Otho, an illustrious knight.
From slaves and pirates to assert the main,
Shall Rome such mighty fleets maintain,
And shall those fleets, that dreadful rule the sea,
A pirate and a slave obey?

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ODE V.

ON THE WITCH CANIDIA.

BUT oh, ye gods, whose awful sway
Heaven, earth, and human-kind obey,
What can this hideous noise intend?
On me what ghastly looks they bend!
If ever chaste Lucina heard
Thy vows in hour of birth preferr'd;
Oh! by this robe's impurpled train,
Its purple pride, alas! how vain!
By the unerring wrath of Jove,
Unerring shall his vengeance prove;
Why like a step-dame do you stare,
Or like a wounded tigress glare?
Thus while his sacred robes they tear,
The trembling boy prefers his prayer;
Then naked stands, with such a form
As might an impious Thracian charm.
Canidia, crown'd with writhing snakes
Dishevell'd, thus the silence breaks:
'Now the magic fire prepare,
And from graves uprooted tear
Trees, whose horrors gloomy spread
Round the mansions of the dead;
Bring the eggs and plumage foul
Of a midnight-shrieking owl;
Be they well besmear'd with blood
Of the blackest-venom'd toad;
From their various climates bring
Every herb that taints the spring;
Then into the charm be thrown,
Snatch'd from famish'd bitch, a bone;
Burn them all with magic flame,
Kindled first by Colchian dame.'
Now Sagana, around the cell,
Sprinkled her waters black from hell;

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Fierce as a porcupine, or boar,
In frightful wreaths her hair she wore.
  Veia, who never knew remorse,
Uplifts the spade with feeble force,
And, breathless with the hellish toil,
Deep-groaning breaks the guilty soil,
Turns out the earth, and digs a grave,
In which the boy (as o'er the wave
A lusty swimmer lifts his head)
Chin-deep sinks downward to the dead,
O'er dainties, chang'd twice thrice a-day,
Slowly to gaze his life away;
That the foul hags an amorous dose
Of his parch'd marrow may compose,
His marrow, and his liver dried,
The seat where wanton thoughts reside,
When, fixt upon his food in vain,
His eye-balls pin'd away by pain.
  Naples, for idleness renown'd,
And all the villages around,
Believe that Folia shar'd their rites,
She who in monstrous lusts delights,
Whose voice the stars from heaven can tear,
And charm bright Luna from her sphere.
  Here, with black tooth and livid jaws,
Her unpar'd thumbs Canidia gnaws,
And into hideous accents broke;
In sounds, how direful! thus she spoke:
  Ye powers of darkness and of hell,
Propitious to the magic spell,
Who rule in silence o'er the night,
While we perform the mystic rite,
Be present now, your horrors shed,
In hallow'd vengeance, on his head.
Beneath the forest's gloomy shade
While beasts in slumbers sweet are laid,
Give me the lecher, old and lewd,
By barking village-curs pursued,
Expos'd to laughter, let him shine
In essence — ah! that once was mine.
  'hat! shall my strongest potions fail,
  d could Medea's charms prevail?

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When the fair harlot, proud of heart,
Deep felt the vengeance of her art;
Her gown, with powerful poisons dyed,
In flames enwrapp'd the guilty bride.
Yet every root and herb I know,
And on what steepy depths they grow,
And yet, with essence round him shed,
He sleeps in some bold harlot's bed;
Or walks at large, nor thinks of me,
By some more mighty witch set free.
But soon the wretch my wrath shall prove,
By spells unwonted taught to love;
Nor shall even Marsian charms have power,
Thy peace, O Varus, to restore.
With stronger drugs, a larger bowl
I'll fill, to bend thy haughty soul;
Sooner the seas to heaven shall rise,
And earth spring upwards to the skies,
Than you not burn in fierce desire,
As melts this pitch in smoky fire.
The boy, with lenient words, no more
Now strives their pity to implore;
With rage yet doubtful what to speak,
Forth from his lips these curses break:—
Your spells may right and wrong remove,
But ne'er shall change the wrath of Jove;
For, while I curse the direful deed,
In vain shall all your victims bleed.
Soon as this tortur'd body dies,
A midnight Fury will I rise:
Then shall my ghost, though form'd of air,
Your cheeks with crooked talons tear,
Unceasing on your entrails prey,
And fright the thoughts of sleep away:
Such horrors shall the guilty know,
Such is the power of gods below.
Ye filthy hags, with showers of stones
The vengeful crowd shall crush your bones;
Then beasts of prey, and birds of air,
Shall your unburied members tear,
And, while they weep their favourite boy,
My parents shall the vengeful sight enjoy.

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ODE VI.

TO CASSIUS SEVERUS.

YOU dog, that fearful to provoke
The wolf, attack offenceless folk!
Turn hither, if you dare, your spite,
And bark at me, prepar'd to bite.
For like a hound, or mastiff keen,
That guards the shepherd's flocky green,
Through the deep snows I boldly chase,
With ears erect, the savage race;
But you, when with your hideous yelling
You fill the grove, at crusts are smelling.
Fierce as Archilochus I glow;
Like Hipponax a deadly foe.
If any mongrel shall assail
My character with tooth and nail;
What! like a truant boy, shall I
Do nothing in revenge—but cry?

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ODE VII.

TO THE ROMAN PEOPLE.

WHITHER, oh! whither, impious, do ye run?
Why is the sword unsheath'd; the war begun?
Has then too little of the Latian blood
Been pour'd on earth, or mix'd with Neptune's flood?
Not that the Romans with avenging flame
Might burn the rival of the Roman name,
Or Britons, yet unbroken to our war,
In chains should follow our triumphal car,
But that the Parthian should his vows enjoy,
And Rome, with impious hand, herself destroy.
The rage of wolves and lions is confin'd;
They never prey but on a different kind.
Answer, From madness rise those horrors dire?
Does angry fate, or guilt, your souls inspire?
Silent they stand; with stupid wonder gaze,
While the pale cheek their inward guilt betrays.
'Tis so—the Fates have cruelly decreed,
That Rome for ancient fratricide must bleed:
The brother's blood, which stain'd our rising walls,
On his descendants, loud, for vengeance calls.

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ODE IX.

TO MÆCENAS.

WHEN shall we quaff your old Cæcubian wine,
Reserv'd for pious feasts and joys divine?
Cæsar with conquest comes, and gracious Jove,
Who gave that conquest, shall our joys approve.
Then bid the breath of harmony inspire
The Doric flute, and wake the Phrygian lyre;
As late, when the Neptunian youth, who spurn'd
A mortal birth, beheld his navy burn'd,
And fled affrighted through his father's waves
With his perfidious host; his host of slaves,
Freed from those chains with which his rage design'd,
Impious! the free-born sons of Rome to bind.
The Roman troops (Oh! be the tale denied
By future times) enslav'd to woman's pride,
And to a wither'd eunuch's will severe
Basely subdu'd, the toils of war could bear.
Amidst the Roman eagles Sol survey'd,
O shame! th' Egyptian canopy display'd;
When twice a thousand Gauls aloud proclaim,
Indignant at the sight, great Cæsar's name,
And a brave fleet, by just resentment led,
Turn'd their broad prows, and to our havens fled.
Come, god of triumphs, bring the golden car,
The untam'd heifers, and the spoils of war;
For he, whose virtue rais'd his awful tomb
O'er ruin'd Carthage, ne'er return'd to Rome
So great and glorious, nor could Libya's field
To thee, O Triumph, such a leader yield.
Pursu'd by land and sea, the vanquish'd foe
Hath chang'd his purple for the garb of woe:
With winds, no more his own; with shatter'd fleet,
He seeks the far-fam'd hundred towns of Crete;
To tempest-beaten Libya speeds his way,
Or drives a vagrant through th' uncertain sea.

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Boy, bring us larger bowls, and fill them round
With Chian, or the Lesbian vintage crown'd,
Or rich Cæcubian, which may best restrain
All sickening qualms, and fortify the brain.
Th' inspiring juice shall the gay banquet warm,
Nor Cæsar's danger shall our fears alarm.

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ODE X.

TO MÆVIUS.

WHEN filthy Mævius hoists the spreading sail,
Each luckless omen shall prevail.
Ye southern winds, invert the foamy tides,
And bang his labouring vessel's sides;
Let Eurus rouse the main with blackening roar,
Crack every cable, every oar;
Let the north wind rise dreadful o'er the floods,
As when it breaks the mountain-woods,
Nor let one friendly star shine o'er the night,
When sets Orion's gloomy light.
Mayst thou no kinder winds, O Mævius, meet,
Than the victorious Grecian fleet,
When Pallas turn'd her rage from ruin'd Troy,
The impious Ajax to destroy.
With streams of sweat the toiling sailor glows,
Thy face a muddy paleness shows;
Nor shall thy vile, unmanly wailings move
The pity of avenging Jove.
While watery winds the bellowing ocean shake,
I see thy luckless vessel break:
But if thy carcase reach the winding shore,
And birds the pamper'd prey devour,
A lamb and lustful goat shall thank the storm,
And I the sacrifice perform.

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ODE XI.

TO PETTIUS.

SINCE cruel love, O Pettius, pierc'd my heart,
How have I lost my once-lov'd lyric art!
Thrice have the woods their leafy honour mourn'd,
Since for Inachia's beauties Horace burn'd.
How was I then (for I confess my shame)
Of every idle tale the laughing theme!
Oh! that I ne'er had known the jovial feast,
Where the deep sigh, that rends the labouring breast,
Where languor, and a gentle silence shows,
To every curious eye, the lover's woes.
Pettius, how often o'er the flowing bowl,
When the gay liquor warm'd my opening soul,
When Bacchus, jovial god, no more restrain'd
The modest secret, how have I complain'd,
That wealthy blockheads, in a female's eyes,
From a poor poet's genius bear the prize!
But if a generous rage my breast should warm,
I swore—no vain amusements e'er shall charm
My aching wounds. Ye vagrant winds, receive
The sighs, that sooth the pains they should relieve;
Here shall my shame of being conquer'd end,
Nor with such rivals will I more contend.
When thus, with solemn air, I vaunting said,
Inspir'd by thy advice I homeward sped:
But ah! my feet in wonted wanderings stray,
And to no friendly doors my steps betray;
There I forget my vows, forget my pride,
And at her threshold lay my tortur'd side.

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ODE XIII.

TO A FRIEND.

SEE what horrid tempests rise,
And contract the clouded skies;
Snows and showers fill the air,
And bring down the atmosphere.
Hark! what tempests sweep the floods!
How they shake the rattling woods!
Let us, while it's in our power,
Let us seize the fleeting hour;
While our cheeks are fresh and gay,
Let us drive old age away;
Let us smooth its gather'd brows,
Youth its hour of mirth allows.
Bring us down the mellow'd wine,
Rich with years, that equal mine;
Prithee, talk no more of sorrow,
To the gods belongs to-morrow,
And, perhaps, with gracious power
They may change the gloomy hour.
Let the richest essence shed
Eastern odours on your head,
While the soft Cyllenian lyre
Shall your labouring breast inspire.
To his pupil, brave and young,
Thus the noble Centaur sung:
Matchless mortal! though 'tis thine,
Proud to boast a birth divine,
Yet the banks, with cooling waves
Which the smooth Scamander laves;
And where Simoïs with pride
Rougher rolls his rapid tide,
Destin'd by unerring Fate,
Shall the sea-born hero wait.

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There the Sisters, fated boy,
Shall thy thread of life destroy,
Nor shall azure Thetis more
Waft thee to thy natal shore;
Then let joy and mirth be thine,
Mirthful songs, and joyous wine,
And with converse blithe and gay
Drive all gloomy cares away.

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ODE XV.

TO NEÆRA.

CLEAR was the night, the face of heaven serene,
Bright shone the moon amidst her starry train,
When round my neck as curls the tendril-vine—
(Loose are its curlings, if compar'd to thine);
'Twas then, insulting every heavenly power,
That, as I dictated, you boldly swore:
While the gaunt wolf pursues the trembling sheep;
While fierce Orion harrows up the deep;
While Phœbus' locks float wanton in the wind,
Thus shall Neæra prove, thus ever kind.
But, if with aught of man was Horace born,
Severely shalt thou feel his honest scorn;
Nor will he tamely bear the bold delight,
With which his rival riots out the night,
But in his anger seek some kinder dame,
Warm with the raptures of a mutual flame;
Nor shall thy rage, thy grief, or angry charms
Recall the lover to thy faithless arms.
And thou, whoe'er thou art, who joy to shine,
Proud as thou art, in spoils which once were mine,
Though wide thy land extends, and large thy fold,
Though rivers roll for thee their purest gold,
Though nature's wisdom in her works were thine,
And beauties of the human face divine,
Yet soon thy pride her wandering love shall mourn,
While I shall laugh, exulting in my turn.

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ODE XVI.

TO THE ROMANS.

IN endless civil war, th' imperial state
By her own strength precipitates her fate.
What neighbouring nations, fiercely leagu'd in arms,
What Porsena, with insolent alarms
Threatening her tyrant monarch to restore;
What Spartacus, and Capua's rival power;
What Gaul, tumultuous and devoid of truth,
And fierce Germania, with her blue-eyed youth;
What Hannibal, on whose accursed head
Our sires their deepest imprecations shed,
In vain attempted to her awful state,
Shall we, a blood-devoted race, complete?
Again shall savage beasts these hills possess?
And fell barbarians, wanton with success,
Scatter our city's flaming ruins wide,
Or through her streets in vengeful triumph ride,
And her great founder's hallow'd ashes spurn,
That sleep uninjur'd in their sacred urn?
But some, perhaps, to shun the rising shame
(Which Heaven approve) would try some happier scheme.
As the Phocæans oft for freedom bled,
At length, with imprecated curses, fled,
And left to boars and wolves the sacred fane,
With all their household gods, ador'd in vain;
So let us fly, as far as earth extends,
Or where the vagrant wind our voyage bends.
Shall this, or shall some better scheme prevail?
Why do we stop to hoist the willing sail?
But let us swear, when floating rocks shall gain,
Rais'd from the deep, the surface of the main;
When lowly Po the mountain-summit laves,
And Apennine shall plunge beneath the waves;
When nature's monsters meet in strange delight,
And the fell tigress shall with stags unite;

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When the fierce kite shall woo the willing dove,
And win the wanton with adulterous love;
When herds on brindled lions fearless gaze,
And the smooth goat exults in briny seas:
Then, and then only, to the tempting gale
To spread repentant the returning sail.
Yet to cut off our hopes, those hopes that charm
Our fondness home, let us with curses arm
These high resolves. Thus let the brave and wise,
Whose souls above th' indocile vulgar rise;
Then let the crowd, who dare not hope success,
Inglorious, these ill-omen'd seats possess.
But ye, whom virtue warms, indulge no more
These female plaints, but quit this fated shore;
For earth-surrounding sea our flight awaits,
Offering its blissful isles, and happy seats,
Where annual Ceres crowns th' uncultur'd field,
And vines unprun'd their blushing clusters yield;
Where olives, faithful to their season, grow,
And figs with nature's deepest purple glow;
From hollow oaks where honey'd streams distil,
And bounds with noisy foot the pebbled rill;
Where goats untaught forsake the flowery vale,
And bring their swelling udders to the pail;
Nor evening bears the sheep-fold growl around,
Nor mining vipers heave the tainted ground;
Nor watry Eurus deluges the plain,
Nor heats excessive burn the springing grain.
Not Argo thither turn'd her armed head;
Medea there no magic poison spread;
No merchants thither plough the pathless main,
For guilty commerce, and a thirst of gain;
Nor wise Ulysses, and his wandering bands,
Vicious, though brave, e'er knew these happy lands.
O'er the glad flocks no foul contagion spreads,
Nor summer sun his burning influence sheds.
Pure and unmix'd the world's first ages roll'd:
But soon as brass had stain'd the flowing gold,
To iron harden'd by succeeding crimes,
Jove for the just preserv'd these happy climes,
To which the gods this pious race invite,
And bid me, raptur'd bard, direct their flight.

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ODE XVII.

TO CANIDIA.

CANIDIA, to thy matchless art,
Vanquish'd I yield a suppliant heart;
But oh! by Hell's extended plains,
Where Pluto's gloomy consort reigns;
By bright Diana's vengeful rage,
Which prayers nor hecatombs assuage;
And by the books, of power to call
The charmed stars, and bid them fall,
No more pronounce the sacred scroll,
But back the magic circle roll.
Even stern Achilles could forgive
The Mysian king, and bid him live,
Though proud he rang'd the ranks of fight,
And hurl'd the spear with daring might.
Thus, when the murderous Hector lay
Condemn'd to dogs, and birds of prey,
Yet when his royal father kneel'd,
The fierce Achilles knew to yield;
And Troy's unhappy matrons paid
Their sorrows to their Hector's shade.
Ulysses' friends, in labours tried,
So Circe will'd, threw off their hide,
Assum'd the human form divine,
And dropp'd the voice and sense of swine.
O thou, whom tars and merchants love,
Too deep thy vengeful rage I prove,
Reduc'd, alas! to skin and bone,
My vigour fled, my colour gone.
Thy fragrant odours on my head
More than the snows of age have shed.
Days press on nights, and nights on days,
Yet never bring an hour of ease,
While, gasping in the pangs of death,
I stretch my lungs in vain for breath.

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Thy charms have power ('tis now confest)
To split the head, and tear the breast.
What would you more, all-charming dame?
O seas, and earth! this scorching flame!
Not such the fire Alcides bore,
When the black-venom'd shirt he wore;
Nor such the flames, that to the skies
From Ætna's burning entrails rise:
And yet, thou shop of poisons dire,
You glow with unrelenting fire,
Till, by the rapid heat calcin'd,
Vagrant I drive before the wind.
How long—? What ransom shall I pay?
Speak—I the stern command obey.
To expiate the guilty deed,
Say, shall a hundred bullocks bleed?
Or shall I to the lying string
Thy fame and spotless virtue sing?
Teach thee, a golden star, to rise,
And deathless walk the spangled skies?
When Helen's virtue was defam'd,
Her brothers, though with rage inflam'd,
Yet to the bard his eyes restor'd,
When suppliant he their grace implor'd.
Oh! calm this madness of my brain,
For you can heal this raging pain.
You never knew the birth of shame,
Nor by thy hand, all-skilful dame,
The poor man's ashes are upturn'd,
Though they be thrice three days inurn'd.
Thy bosom's bounteous and humane,
Thy hand from blood and murder clean;
And with a blooming race of boys
Lucina crowns thy mother-joys.

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CANIDIA'S ANSWER.

I'LL hear no more. Thy prayers are vain.
Not rocks, amid the wintry main,
Less heed the shipwreck'd sailor's cries,
When Neptune bids the tempest rise.
Shall you Cotyttia's feast deride,
Yet safely triumph in thy pride?
Or, impious, to the glare of day
The sacred joys of love betray?
Or fill the city with my name,
And pontiff-like our rites defame?
Did I with wealth in vain enrich
Of potent spells each charming witch,
Or mix the speedy drugs in vain?
No—through a lingering length of pain
Reluctant shalt thou drag thy days,
While every hour new pangs shall raise.
Gazing on the delusive feast,
Which charms his eye, yet flies his taste,
Perfidious Tantalus implores,
For rest, for rest, the vengeful powers;
Prometheus, while the vulture preys
Upon his liver, longs for ease;
And Sisyphus, with many a groan,
Uprolls, with ceaseless toil, his stone,
To fix it on the topmost hill—
In vain—for Jove's all-ruling will
Forbids. When thus in black despair
Down from some castle, high in air,
You seek a headlong fate below,
Or try the dagger's pointed blow,
Or if the left-ear'd knot you tie,
Yet death your vain attempts shall fly;
Then on your shoulders will I ride,
And earth shall shake beneath my pride.

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Could I with life an image warm
(Impertinent, you saw the charm),
Or tear down Luna from her skies,
Or bid the dead, though burn'd, arise.
Or mix the draught inspiring love,
And shall my art on thee successless prove?

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THE

SECULAR POEM.

The Poet to the People.

STAND off, ye vulgar, nor profane,
With bold, unhallow'd sounds, this festal scene:
In hymns inspir'd by truth divine,
I, priest of the melodious Nine,
To youths and virgins sing the mystic strain.

To the Chorus of Youths and Virgins.

PHŒBUS taught me how to sing,
How to tune the vocal string;
Phœbus made me known to Fame,
Honour'd with a poet's name.
Noble youths, and virgins fair,
Chaste Diana's guardian care
(Goddess, whose unerring dart
Stops the lynx, or flying hart),
Mark the Lesbian measures well,
Where they fall, and where they swell;
And in varied cadence sing,
As I strike the changing string.
To the god, who gilds the skies,
Let the solemn numbers rise;
Solemn sing the queen of night,
And her crescent's bending light,
Which adown the fruitful year
Rolls the months in prone career.
Soon, upon her bridal day,
Thus the joyful maid shall say:

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When the great revolving year
Bade the festal morn appear,
High the vocal hymn I rais'd,
And the listening gods were pleas'd:
All the vocal hymn divine,
Horace, tuneful bard, was thine.

FIRST CONCERT.

HYMN TO APOLLO.

Chorus of Youths and Virgins.

TITYOS, with impious lust inspir'd,
By chaste Latona's beauties fir'd,
Thy wrath, O Phœbus, tried;
And Niobe, of tongue profane,
Deplor'd her numerous offspring slain,
Sad victims of their mother's pride.

Achilles too, the son of Fame,
Though sprung from Thetis, sea-born dame,
And first of men in fight,
Though warring with tremendous spear
He shook the Trojan towers with fear,
Yet bow'd to thy superior might;

The cypress, when by storms impell'd,
Or pine, by biting axes fell'd,
Low bends the towering head:
So falling on th' ensanguin'd plain,
By your unerring arrow slain,
His mighty bulk the hero spread.

He had not Priam's heedless court,
Dissolv'd in wine, and festal sport,
With midnight art surpris'd;
But bravely bold, of open force,
Had proudly scorn'd Minerva's horse,
And all its holy cheat despis'd;

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Then arm'd, alas! with horrors dire,
Wide-wasting with resistless ire,
Into the flames had thrown
Infants, upon whose faltering tongue
Their words in formless accents hung,
Infants to light and life unknown:

But charm'd by beauty's queen and thee,
The sire of gods, with just decree
Assenting, shook the skies;
That Troy should change th' imperial seat,
And, guided by a better fate,
Glorious in distant realms should rise.

Oh! may the god, who could inspire
With living sounds the Grecian lyre;
In Xanthus' lucid stream
Who joys to bathe his flowing hair,
Now make the Latian muse his care,
And powerful guard her rising fame!

SECOND CONCERT.

Chorus of Youths.

* YE virgins, sing Diana's praise.

Chorus of Virgins.

Ye boys, let youthful Phœbus crown your lays.

The Two Choirs.

Together let us raise the voice
To her, belov'd by Jove supreme;
Let fair Latona be the theme,
Our tuneful theme, his beauteous choice.

* The twenty-first Ode of the first Book.

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Chorus of Youths.

Ye virgins, sing Diana's fame,
Who bathes delighted in the limpid stream;
Dark Erymanthus' awful groves,
The woods that Algidus o'erspread,
Or wave on Cragus' verdant head,
Joyous th' immortal huntress loves.

Chorus of Virgins.

Ye boys, with equal honour sing
Fair Tempe cloth'd with ever-blooming spring;
Then hail the Delian birth divine,
Whose shoulders, beaming heavenly fire,
Grac'd with his brother's warbling lyre,
And with the golden quiver shine.

Chorus of Youths and Virgins.

Mov'd by the solemn voice of prayer,
They both shall make imperial Rome their care,
And gracious turn the direful woes
Of famine and of weeping war
From Rome, from sacred Cæsar far,
And pour them on our British foes.

THIRD CONCERT.

TO APOLLO AND DIANA.

Chorus of Youths and Virgins.

YE radiant glories of the skies,
Ever-beaming god of light,
Sweetly-shining queen of night,
Beneath whose wrath the wood-born savage dies;
Ye powers, to whom with ceaseless praise
A grateful world its homage pays,

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Let our prayer, our prayer be heard,
Now in this solemn hour preferr'd,
When by the Sibyl's dread command,
Of spotless maids a chosen train,
Of spotless youths a chosen band,
To all our guardian gods uplift the hallow'd strain.

Chorus of Youths.

Fair Sun, who with unchanging beam
Rising another and the same,
Dost from thy beamy car unfold
The glorious day,
Or hide it in thy setting ray,
Of light and life immortal source,
Mayst thou, in all thy radiant course,
Nothing more great than seven-hill'd Rome behold!

Chorus of Virgins.

Goddess of the natal hour,
Or, if other name more dear,
Propitious power,
Can charm your ear,
Our pregnant matrons gracious hear:
With lenient hand their pangs compose,
Heal their agonizing throes;
Give the springing birth to light,
And with every genial grace,
Prolific of an endless race,
Oh! crown our marriage-laws, and bless the nuptial rite:

Chorus of Youths and Virgins.

That when the circling years complete
Again this awful season bring,
Thrice with the day's revolving light,
Thrice beneath the shades of night,
In countless bands our youthful choirs may sing
These festal hymns, these pious games repeat.

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Ye Fates, from whom unerring flows
The word of truth; whose firm decree
Its stated bounds and order knows,
Wide-spreading through eternity,
With guardian care around us wait,
And with successive glories crown the state.

Let earth her various fruitage yield,
Her living verdure spread,
And form, amid the waving field,
A sheafy crown for Ceres' head;
Full genial showers, and o'er our fleecy care
May Jove indulgent breathe his purest air!

Chorus of Youths.

Phœbus, whose kindly beams impart
Health and gladness to the heart,
While in its quiver lies the pestilential dart,
Thy youthful suppliants hear:

Chorus of Virgins.

Queen of the stars, who rul'st the night
In horned majesty of light,
Bend to thy virgins a propitious ear.

Chorus of Youths and Virgins.

If, ye gods, the Roman state
Was form'd by your immortal power,
Or if, to change th' imperial seat,
And other deities adore,
Beneath your guidance the Dardanian host
Pour'd forth their legions on the Tuscan coast;

For whom Æneas, through the fire,
In which he saw his Troy expire,
A passage open'd to an happier clime,
Where they might nobler triumphs gain,
And to never-ending time
With boundless empire reign,

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Ye gods, inform our docile youth
With early principles of truth;
Ye gods, indulge the waning days
Of silver'd age with placid ease,
And grant to Rome an endless race,
Treasure immense, and every sacred grace.

The prince, who owes to beauty's queen his birth,
Who bids the snowy victim's blood
Pour forth to-day its purple flood,
Oh! may he glorious rule the conquer'd earth;
But yet a milder glory show
In mercy to the prostrate foe!

Already the fierce Mede his arms reveres,
Which wide extend th' imperial sway,
And bid th' unwilling world obey;
The haughty Indian owns his fears,
And Scythians, doubtful of their doom,
Await the dread resolves of Rome.

Faith, Honour, Peace, celestial maid,
And Modesty, in ancient guise array'd,
And Virtue (with unhallow'd scorn
Too long neglected) now appear,
While Plenty fills her bounteous horn,
And pours her blessings o'er the various year.

Chorus of Youths.

If the prophetic power divine,
Fam'd for the golden bow and quiver'd dart,
Who knows to charm the listening Nine,
And feeble mortals raise with healing art;
If he with gracious eye survey the towers,
Where Rome his deity adores,
Oh! let each era still presage
Increase of happiness from age to age!

Chorus of Virgins.

Oh! may Diana, on these favourite hills,
Whose diffusive presence fills

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Her hallow'd fane,
Propitious deign
Our holy priests to hear,
And to our youth incline her willing ear!

Chorus of Youths and Virgins.

Lo! we the chosen, youthful choir,
Taught with harmonious voice to raise
Apollo's and Diana's praise,
In full and certain hope retire,
That all th' assembled gods, and sovereign Jove,
These pious vows, these choral hymns approve.

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SATIRES.

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SATIRES.

BOOK I.

SATIRE I.

TO MÆCENAS.

MÆCENAS, what's the cause, that no man lives
Contented with the lot which Reason gives,
Or Chance presents; yet all with envy view
The schemes that others variously pursue?
Broken with toils, with ponderous arms oppreat,
The soldier thinks the merchant solely blest.
In opposite extreme; when tempests rise,
War is a better choice, the merchant cries;
The battle joins, and in a moment's flight,
Death, or a joyful conquest, ends the fight.
When early clients thunder at his gate,
The barrister applauds the rustic's fate:
While, by subpœnas dragg'd from home, the clown
Thinks they alone are blest who live in town.
But every various instance to repeat
Would tire ev'n Fabius, of eternal prate.
Not to be tedious, mark the general aim
Of these examples—Should some god proclaim,
"Your prayers are heard: You, soldier, to your seas;
You, lawyer, take that envied rustic's ease:
Each to his several part—What! ha! not move
Even to the bliss you wish'd?" And shall not Jove
Swell both his cheeks with anger, and forswear
His weak indulgence to their future prayer?
But not to treat my subject as in jest
(Yet may not truth in laughing guise be drest?

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As masters fondly sooth their boys to read
With cakes and sweetmeats), let us now proceed;
With graver air our serious theme pursue,
And yet preserve our moral full in view.
Who turns the soil, and o'er the ploughshare bends;
He who adulterates the laws, and vends;
The soldier, and th' adventurers of the main,
Profess their various labours they sustain,
A decent competence for age to raise,
And then retire to indolence and ease.

Miser.

For thus the little ant (to human lore
No mean example) forms her frugal store,
Gather'd, with mighty toil, on every side,
Nor ignorant, nor careless to provide
For future want.

Horace.

Yet, when the stars appear,
That darkly sadden the declining year,
No more she comes abroad, but wisely lives
On the fair store industrious summer gives.
For thee, nor summer's heat, nor winter's cold,
Fire, sea, nor sword, stop thy pursuit of gold;
Nothing can break th' adventurous, bold design,
So none possess a larger sum than thine.
But, prithee, whence the pleasure, thus by stealth
Deep in the earth to hide thy weight of wealth?

Miser.

One farthing lessen'd, you the mass reduce.

Horace.

And if not lessen'd, whence can rise its use?
What though you thresh a thousand sacks of grain,
No more than mine thy stomach can contain.
The slave who bears the load of bread, shall eat
No more than he who never felt the weight.
Or say, what difference, if we live confin'd
Within the bounds by Nature's laws assign'd,
Whether a thousand acres of demesne,
Or one poor hundred, yield sufficient grain?

Miser.

Oh! but 'tis sweet to take from larger hoards.

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Horace.

Yet, if my little heap as much affords,
Why shall your granaries be valued more
Than my small hampers, with their frugal store?
You want a cask of water, or would fill
An ample goblet; whence the froward will
To choose a mighty river's rapid course,
Before this little fountain's lenient source?
But mark his fate, insatiate who desires
Deeper to drink, than nature's thirst requires;
With its torn banks the torrent bears away
Th' intemperate wretch; while he, who would allay
With healthy draughts his thirst, shall drink secure,
Fearless of death, and quaff his water pure.
Some, self-deceiv'd, who think their lust of gold
Is but a love of fame, this maxim hold,
No fortune's large enough, since others rate
Your worth proportion'd to a large estate.
Say, for their cure what arts would you employ?
"Let them be wretched, and their choice enjoy."
At Athens liv'd a wight, in days of yore,
Though miserably rich, yet fond of more,
But of intrepid spirit to despise
Th' abusive crowd. "Let them hiss on," he cries,
"While, in my own opinion fully blest,
I count my money, and enjoy my chest."
Burning with thirst, when Tantalus would quaff
The flying waters—Wherefore do you laugh?
Change but the name, of thee the tale is told,
With open mouth when dozing o'er your gold.
On every side the numerous bags are pil'd,
Whose hallow'd stores must never be defil'd
To human use; while you transported gaze,
As if, like pictures, they were form'd to please.
Would you the real use of riches know?
Bread, herbs, and wine are all they can bestow:
Or add, what nature's deepest wants supplies;
This, and no more, thy mass of money buys.
But, with continual watching almost dead,
House-breaking thieves, and midnight fires to dread,
Or the suspected slave's untimely flight
With the dear pelf; if this be thy delight,

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Be it my fate, so heaven in bounty please,
Still to be poor of blessings such as these!

Miser.

If, by a cold some painful illness bred,
Or other chance confine you to your bed,
Your wealth shall purchase some good-natur'd friend
Your cordials to prepare, your couch attend,
And urge the doctor to preserve your life,
And give you to your children and your wife.

Horace.

Nor wife, nor son, that hated life would save,
While all, who know thee, wish thee in the grave.
And canst thou wonder that they prove unkind,
When all thy passions are to gold confin'd?
Nature, 'tis true, in each relation gave
A friend sincere; yet what you thus receive,
If you imagine with unfeeling heart
And careless manners to preserve, your art
As well may teach an ass to scour the plain,
And bend obedient to the forming rein.
Yet somewhere should your views of lucre cease,
Nor let your fears of poverty increase,
As does your wealth; for, since you now possess
Your utmost wish, your labour should be less.
Ummidius once (the tale is quickly told),
So wondrous rich, he measur'd out his gold,
Yet never dress'd him better than a slave,
Afraid of starving ere he reach'd his grave:
But a bold wench, of right virago strain,
Cleft with an axe the wretched wight in twain.

Miser.

By your advice, what party shall I take?
Like Mænius live a prodigal, and rake
Like Nomentanus?

Horace.

Why will you pretend,
With such extremes, your conduct to defend?
The sordid miser when I justly blame,
I would not have you prodigal of fame,
Spendthrift or rake; for sure some difference lies
Between the very fool and very wise;

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Some certain mean in all things may be found,
To mark our virtues, and our vices bound.
  But to return from whence we have digress'd:
And is the miser, then, alone unblest?
Does he alone applaud his neighbour's fate,
Or pine with envy of his happier state?
To crowds beneath him never turn his eye,
Where in distress the sons of virtue lie,
But, to outspeed the wealthy, bend his force,
As if they stopp'd his own impetuous course?
  Thus, from the goal when swift the chariot flies,
The charioteer the bending lash applies,
To overtake the foremost on the plain,
But looks on all behind him with disdain.
From hence, how few, like sated guests, depart
From life's full banquet with a cheerful heart!
  But let me stop, lest you suspect I stole
From blind Crispinus this eternal scroll.

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SATIRE II.

TO MÆCENAS.

THE tribes of minstrels, strolling priests and players,
Perfumers, and buffoons, are all in tears;
For ah! Tigellius, sweetest songster,'s dead,
And sure the soul of bounty with him fled.
  Behold a wretch, in opposite extreme,
So fearful of a spendthrift's odious name,
He dare not ev'n a sordid pittance give
To raise a worthy friend, and bid him live.
Or ask another, why in thankless feasts
The wealth of all his frugal sires he wastes;
Then the luxurious treat profuse supplies
With borrow'd sums: Because I scorn, he cries,
To be a wretch of narrow spirit deem'd.—
By some condemn'd, by others he's esteem'd.
  Fufidius, rich in lands, and large increase
Of growing usury, dreads the foul disgrace
To be call'd rake; and, ere the money's lent,
He prudently deducts his cent. per cent.
Then, as he finds the borrower distrest,
Cruel demands a higher interest,
But lends profusely to the lavish heir,
Whose guardians prove too frugally severe.
All-powerful Jove, th' indignant reader cries,
"But his expenses, with his income, rise."
No—'tis amazing, that this man of pelf
Hath yet so little friendship for himself,
That ev'n the Self-tormentor in the play,
Cruel who drove his much-lov'd son away,
Amidst the willing tortures of despair
Could not with wretchedness like his compare.
  But say, at what this tedious preface aims—
That fools are ever vicious in extremes.

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While soft Malthinus trails a length of train,
See that short robe ridiculously obscene.
Rufillus with perfumes distracts your head:
With his own scents Gorgonius strikes you dead.
There are, all other passions who disclaim,
Except th' impurpled robe, and wedded dame:
Others their safer, cheaper pleasures choose,
And take a willing mistress from the stews.
When awful Cato saw a noted spark
From a night-cellar stealing in the dark,
"Well done, my friend: if love thy breast inflame,
Indulge it here, and spare the married dame."
Be mine the silken veil, Cupiennius cries,
Such vulgar praise and pleasure I despise.
All ye, who wish some dire mishap may wait
This horning tribe, attend while I relate
What dangers and disasters they sustain,
How few their pleasures, and how mix'd with pain.
A desperate leap one luckless caitiff tries;
Torn by the fragrant lash another dies:
Some are by robbers plunder'd as they fly;
Others with gold a wretched safety buy.
Such various woes pursue these sons of lust,
And all, but Galba, own the sentence just.
Far safer they, who venture their estate,
And trade with females of the second rate.
"Yet Sallust rages here with wild desires,
As mad as those which lawless love inspires."
But had he been with less profusion kind,
Had common sense his lavish hand confin'd,
He had not now been wholly lost to shame,
In fortune ruin'd, as undone in fame.
But here's the joy and comfort of his life,
To swear, he never touch'd his neighbour's wife.
Thus, to an actress when with lavish hand
Marsæus gave his mansion-house and land,
My soul, thank heaven, he cries, from guilt is free;
The wedded dames are Vestal maids for me.
Actress or not, the crime is still the same,
Equal the ruin of estate and fame;
Equal the folly, whether in pursuit
Of wife, or slave, or loose-rob'd prostitute;

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Unless you mean, content to be undone,
To hate the person, not the vice to shun.
  Of Sylla's wanton daughter when possest,
Villius believ'd himself supremely blest:
To a dictator thus to be allied,
Dazzled his senses, and indulg'd his pride:
But sure, if vanity were fairly rated,
Methinks poor Villius was full hardly treated,
When buffeted and stabb'd the coxcomb dies,
While in the wanton's arms a scoundrel lies.
  But Nature, rich in her own proper wealth
Of youth and beauty, cheerfulness and health,
In her pursuit of happiness disclaims
The pride of titles, and the pomp of names.
Be thine her wise economy to learn,
And real from affected bliss discern.
Then, lest repentance punish such a life,
Never, ah! never kiss your neighbour's wife;
For see, what thousand mischiefs round you rise,
And few the pleasures, though you gain the prize.
  What though Cerinthus dotes upon the girl,
Who flames with emerald green, or snowy pearl,
Is she beyond a common mistress blest
With leg more taper, or a softer breast?
  Besides, the public nymph no varnish knows,
But all her venal beauties frankly shows,
Nor boasts some happier charm with conscious pride,
Nor strives a vile deformity to hide.
When skilful jockeys would a courser buy,
They strip him naked to the curious eye;
For oft an eager chapman is betray'd
To buy a founder'd or a spavin'd jade,
While he admires a thin, light-shoulder'd chest,
A little head, broad back, and rising crest.
  Th' example's good: then keep it in thy mind,
Nor to the fair-one's faults be over-blind,
Nor gaze with idle rapture on her charms;
"Oh! what a taper leg! what snowy arms!"
For she may hide, whate'er she vainly shows,
Low hips, short waist, splay feet, and hideous length of nose.

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But if you still pursue this dangerous game
(Perhaps the dangers your desires inflame)
What formidable works around her rise!
Maids, chairmen, footmen, flatterers, guard the prize.
The flowing robe, and closely muffled veil
With envious folds the precious thing conceal;
But what from nature's commoners you buy,
Through the thin robe stands naked to your eye:
Or, if you will be cheated, pay the fair,
With foolish fondness, ere she shows her ware.
As when a sportsman through the snowy waste
Pursues a hare, which he disdains to taste,
"So (sings the rake) my passion can despise
An easy prey, but follow when it flies."
Yet can these idle versicles remove
The griefs and tortures of this guilty love?
Were it not better wisdom to inquire
How nature bounds each impotent desire;
What she with ease resigns, or wants with pain,
And thus divide the solid from the vain?
Say, should your jaws with thirst severely burn,
Would you a cleanly earthen pitcher spurn?
Should hunger on your gnawing entrails seize,
Will turbot only or a peacock please?
Let her be straight and fair; nor wish to have
Or height or colour Nature never gave:
Then, while with joy I woo the pleasing fair,
What nymph, what goddess, can with mine compare?
No terrors rise to interrupt my joys,
No jealous husband, nor the fearful noise
Of bursting doors, nor the loud hideous yelling
Of barking dogs, that shakes the matron's dwelling,
When the pale wanton leaps from off her bed,
The conscious chamber-maid screams out her dread
Of horrid tortures; loudly cries the wife,
"My jointure's lost,"—I tremble for my life:
Unbutton'd, without shoes, I speed away,
Lest in my person, purse, or fame, I pay.
To be surpris'd is, sure, a wretched tale,
And for the truth to Fabius I appeal.

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SATIRE III.

TO MÆCENAS.

WITH this one vice all songsters are possest;
Sing they can never at a friend's request,
Yet chant it forth, unask'd, from morn to night—
This vice Tigellius carried to its height.
Cæsar, who might command in firmer tone,
If, by his father's friendship and his own,
He ask'd a song, was sure to ask in vain;
Yet, when the whim prevail'd, in endless strain
Through the whole feast the jovial catch he plies,
From base to treble o'er the gamut flies.
Nothing was firm, or constant, in the man;
He, sometimes, like a frighted coward ran,
Whose foes are at his heels; then solemn stalk'd,
As if at Juno's festival he walk'd.
Now with two hundred slaves he crowds his train;
Now walks with ten. In high and haughty strain,
At morn, of tetrarchs and of kings he prates;
At night—"A three-legg'd table, O ye Fates,
A little shell the sacred salt to hold,
And clothes, though coarse, to keep me from the cold."
Yet give the man, thus frugal, thus content,
Ten thousand pounds, and every shilling's spent
In five short days. He drank the night away
Till rising dawn, then snor'd out all the day.
Sure such a various creature ne'er was known.—
"Has Horace, then, no vices of his own?"
That I have vices, frankly I confess,
But of a different kind, and somewhat less.
Mænius, behind his back, at Novius rail'd,
"What! don't you know yourself, or think conceal'd
From us, who know you, what a life you live?"
Mænius replies, Indulgent, I forgive
The follies I commit. This foolish love
And criminal, our censure should reprove.

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For wherefore, while you carelessly pass by
Your own worst vices with unheeding eye,
Why so sharp-sighted in another's fame,
Strong as an eagle's ken, or dragon's beam?
But know, that he with equal spleen shall view,
With equal rigour shall your faults pursue.
  Your friend is passionate; perhaps unfit
For the brisk petulance of modern wit.
His hair ill-cut, his robe that awkward flows,
Or his large shoes, to raillery expose
The man you love; yet is he not possest
Of virtues, with which very few are blest?
While underneath this rude, uncouth disguise
A genius of extensive knowledge lies.
  Search your own breast, and mark with honest care
What seeds of folly Nature planted there,
Or Custom rais'd; for an uncultur'd field
Shall for the fire its thorns and thistles yield.
  And yet a shorter method we may find,
As lovers, to their fair-one fondly blind,
Even on her foulness can delighted gaze;
For Hagne's wen can good Balbinus please.
Oh! were our weakness to our friends the same,
And stamp'd by Virtue with some honour'd name!
  Nor should we to their faults be more severe,
Than an indulgent father to his heir:
If with distorted eyes the urchin glares,
"Oh! the dear boy, how prettily he stares!"
Is he of dwarfish and abortive size?
"Sweet little moppet!" the fond father cries:
Or is th' unshapen cub deform'd and lame?
He kindly lisps him o'er some tender name.
  Thus, if your friend's too frugally severe,
Let him a wise economist appear.
Is he, perhaps, impertinent and vain?
"The pleasant creature means to entertain."
Is he too free to prate, or frankly rude?
"'Tis manly plainness all, and fortitude."
Is he too warm? "No: spirited and bold."
Thus shall we gain new friends, and keep the old.
But we distort their virtue to a crime,
And joy th' untainted vessel to begrime.

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Have we a modest friend, and void of art?
"He's a fat-headed wretch, and cold of heart."
While we converse with an ill-natur'd age,
Where calumny and envy lawless rage,
Is there a man by long experience wise,
Still on his guard, nor open to surprise?
His cautious wisdom and prudential fear
Shall artifice and false disguise appear.
If any one of simple, thoughtless kind
(Such as you oft your careless poet find)
Who life's politer manners never knew,
If, while we read, or some fond scheme pursue,
He tease us with his mere impertinence,
We cry, The creature wants even common sense.
Alas! what laws of how severe a strain,
Against ourselves we thoughtlessly ordain!
For we have all our vices, and the best
Is he, who with the fewest is opprest.
A kinder friend, who balances my good
And bad together, as in truth he should,
If haply my good qualities prevail,
Inclines indulgent to the sinking scale.
For like indulgence let his errors plead,
His merits be with equal measure weigh'd;
For he, who hopes his bile shall not offend,
Should overlook the pimples of his friend,
And even in justice to his own defects,
At least should grant the pardon he expects.
But since we never from the breast of fools
Can root their passions; yet while Reason rules,
Let it hold forth its scales with equal hand,
Justly to punish, as the crimes demand.
If a poor slave, who takes away your plate,
Lick the warm sauce, or half-cold fragments eat,
Yet should you crucify the wretch, we swear
Not Labeo's madness can with yours compare.
Is the crime less, or less the want of sense,
Thus to resent a trivial, slight offence?
Forgive the man you lov'd, or you'll appear
Of joyless kind, ill-natur'd and severe;
Yet you detest him, and with horror shun,
As debtors from the ruthless Ruso run,

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Who damns the wretches on th' appointed day
His interest or principal to pay,
Or else, like captives, stretch the list'ning ear
His tedious tales of history to hear.
A friend has foul'd my couch: ah! deep disgrace!
Or off the table thrown some high-wrought vase,
Or, hungry, snatch'd a chicken off my plate,
Shall I for this a good companion hate?
What if he robb'd me, or his trust betray'd,
Or broke the sacred promise he had made?
Who hold all crimes alike are deep distrest,
When we appeal to Truth's impartial test.
Sense, custom, social good, from whence arise
All forms of right and wrong, the fact denies.
When the first mortals crawling rose to birth,
Speechless and wretched, from their mother-earth,
For caves and acorns, then the food of life,
With nails and fists they held a bloodless strife;
But soon improv'd, with clubs they bolder fought,
And various arms, which sad experience wrought,
Till words, to fix the wandering voice, were found,
And names impress'd a meaning upon sound.
Thenceforth they cease from war; their towns enclose
With formidable walls, and laws compose
To strike the thief and highwayman with dread,
And vindicate the sacred marriage-bed.
For woman, long ere Helen's fatal charms,
Destructive woman! set the world in arms:
But the first heroes died unknown to fame,
Like beasts who ravish'd the uncertain dame;
When, as the stoutest bull commands the rest,
The weaker by the stronger was opprest.
Turn o'er the world's great annals, and you find,
That laws were first invented by mankind
To stop oppression's rage. For though we learn,
By nature, good from evil to discern;
What we should wise pursue, or cautious fly;
Yet can she never, with a constant eye,
Of legal justice mark each nice extreme;
Nor can right reason prove the crime the same,
To rob a garden, or, by fear unaw'd,
To steal, by night, the sacred things of God.

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Then let the punishment be fairly weigh'd
Against the crime; nor let the wretch be flay'd,
Who scarce deserv'd the lash.—I cannot fear,
That you shall prove too tenderly severe,
While you assert all vices are the same;
And threaten, that were yours the power supreme,
Robbers and thieves your equal rage should feel,
Uprooted by the same avenging steel.
If your wise man's a shoemaker profest,
Handsome and rich; of monarchy possest,
Why wish for what you have?

Stoic.

Yet hold, my friend,
And better to the Stoic's sense attend.
For though the wise nor shoes, nor slippers made,
He's yet a skilful shoemaker by trade;
Thus, though Hermogenes may sing no more,
He knows the whole extent of music's power;
Alfenus thus turn'd lawyer in his pride,
His shop shut up, his razors thrown aside,
Was still a barber: so the wise alone
Is of all trades, though exercising none,
And reigns a monarch, though without a throne.

Horace.

Great king of kings, unless you drive away
This pressing crowd, the boys in wanton play
Will pluck you by the beard, while you shall growl,
Wretch as thou art, and burst in spleen of soul.
In short, while in a farthing bath you reign,
With only one poor life-guard in your train;
While the few friends, with whom I joy to live,
Fool as I am, my follies can forgive,
I will to them the same indulgence show,
And bliss like mine thy kingship ne'er shall know.

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SATIRE IV.

THE comic poets, in its earliest age
Who form'd the manners of the Grecian stage,
Was there a villain, who might justly claim
A better right of being damn'd to fame,
Rake, cut-throat, thief, whatever was his crime,
They freely stigmatis'd the wretch in rhime.
From their example whole Lucilius rose,
Though different measures, different verse he chose.
He rallied with a gay and easy air,
But rude his numbers, and his style severe.
He weakly fancied it a glorious feat
His hundred lines extempore to repeat,
And as his verses like a torrent roll,
The stream runs muddy, and the water's foul.
He prattled rhimes; but lazy and unfit
For writing well; for much, I own, he writ.
Crispinus thus my littleness defies;
"Here make the smallest bet," the boaster cries.

Crispinus.

"Pen, ink, and paper—name your place and time:
Then, try, friend Flaccus, who can fastest rhime."

Horace.

Thank heaven, that form'd me of an humbler kind;
No wit, nor yet to prattling much inclin'd,
While thou shalt imitate the winds, that blow
From lungs of leather, till the metal flow.
Thrice happy Fannius, of his own free grace
Who in Apollo's temple hangs his face,
And gilds his works to view; while I with fear
Repeat my verses to the public ear;
Because by few such works as mine are read,
Conscious of meriting the lash they dread.
Take me a man, at venture, from the crowd,
And he's ambitious, covetous, or proud.
One burns to madness for the wedded dame;
Intemperate lusts another's breast inflame.

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The silver vase with pleasure one admires,
While Albius o'er a bronze antique expires;
The venturous merchant, from the rising day
To regions warm'd beneath the setting ray,
Like dust collected by a whirlwind, flies
To save his pelf, or bid the mass arise.
All these the poet dread, his rhimes detest—
"Yonder he drives—avoid that furious beast;
If he may have his jest, he never cares
At whose expense, nor his best friend he spares;
And if he once, in his malignant vein,
The cruel paper with invectives stain,
The slaves, who carry water through the street,
To his charm'd ear his verses must repeat."
Now hear this short defence. For my own part,
I claim no portion of the poet's art.
'Tis not enough to close the flowing line,
And in ten syllables your sense confine,
Or write in mere prosaic rhimes like me,
That can deserve the name of poetry.
Is there a man, whom real genius fires,
Whom the diviner soul of verse inspires;
Who talks true greatness; let him boldly claim
The sacred honours of a poet's name.
Some therefore ask, Can comedy be thought
A real poem, since it may be wrought
In style and subject without fire or force,
And, bate the numbers, is but mere discourse.
"But yet in passion'd tone the sire can chide
His spendthrift son, who spurns the portion'd bride,
And keeps a common wench, or deep in drink
Reels in fair day-light (shameful) with his link."
Yet could Pomponius from his father hear,
Were he alive, a lecture less severe?
'Tis not enough your language to refine,
When, if you break the measures of the line,
In common life an angry father's rage
Is but the same as Demea's on the stage.
Take from Lucilius' verses, or from mine,
The cadences, and measures of the line,
Then change their order, and the words transpose,
No more the scatter'd poet's limbs it shows;

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Not so—When hideous Discord bursts the bars,
And iron gates, to pour forth all her wars.
Of this enough; some future work shall show,
Whether 'tis real poetry, or no.
Now tell me, whether satire should appear,
With reason, such an object of your fear.
Sulcius, and Caprius, fiercest of their trade,
Hoarse with the virulence, with which they plead,
When through the streets they stalk with libels arm'd,
Mark how the thieves and robbers are alarm'd;
But yet the man of honest hands and pure
May scorn them both, in innocence secure:
Or though like Cœlius you a villain be,
I'm no informer: whence your fears of me?
With printers and their shops I never deal;
No rubric pillar sets my works to sale,*
O'er which the hands of vulgar readers sweat,
Or whose soft strains Tigellius can repeat.
Even by my friends compell'd I read my lays,
Nor every place nor every audience please.
Full many bards the public Forum choose
Where to recite the labours of their Muse;
Or vaulted baths, that best preserve the sound,
While sweetly floats the voice in echoes round.
The coxcombs never think at whose expense
They thus indulge the dear impertinence.
"But you in libels, mischievous, delight,
And never, but in spleen of genius, write."
Is there, with whom I live, who knows my heart,
Who taught you how to aim this venom'd dart?
He, who malignant tears an absent friend,
Or, when attack'd by others, don't defend;
Who trivial bursts of laughter strives to raise,
And courts of prating petulance the praise;
Of things he never saw who tells his tale,
And friendship's secrets knows not to conceal,—
This man is vile: here, Roman, fix your mark;
His soul is black, as his complexion's dark.
At tables, crowded with a dozen guests,
Some one shall scatter round his frigid jests,
And only spare his host, until the bowl,
Fair friend of truth, unlocks his inmost soul;

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Yet, though a cruel joker you detest,
He seems a courteous, well-bred, easy guest.
But if in idle raillery I said,
Rufillus with perfumes distracts my head,
While foul Gorgonius breathes a ranker air,
You think me most envenom'd and severe.
If we, by chance, that thief Petillius name,
You, as your custom is, defend his fame.
"Petillius is my friend; from early youth
Cheerful we liv'd together, and in truth
I have been much indebted to his power,
And I rejoice to find his danger o'er.
But in the name of wonder be it said,
At that same trial how he sav'd his head."—
Such rancour this, of such a poisonous vein,
As never, never, shall my paper stain;
Much less infect my heart, if I may dare
For my own heart, in any thing, to swear.
Yet some indulgence I may justly claim,
If too familiar with another's fame.
The best of fathers, on my youthful breast,
The detestation of a vice impress'd
By strong examples. Would he have me live
Content with what his industry could give,
In frugal, sparing sort, "Behold, my son,
Young Albius there, how wretchedly undone!
Yet no mean lesson is the spendthrift's fate
To caution youth from squandering their estate."
To fright me from the harlot's vagrant bed,
"Behold Scetanius, and his ruin dread:"
That I might ne'er pursue the wedded dame,
"A lawful Venus will indulge your flame.
My son, by poor Trebonius be advis'd;
Sure, 'tis no pleasant tale to be surpris'd."
"'Twixt right and wrong the learned may decide,
With wise distinctions may your conduct guide;
Be mine the common wisdom, that inspires
The frugal manners of our ancient sires,
And, while your youth may yet a tutor claim,
To guard your virtue, and preserve your fame;
But soon as time confirms, with stronger tone,
Your strength and mind, your conduct be your own."

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Thus did he form my youth with lenient hand.
When he for virtue urg'd the soft command,
Pointing some awful senator to view,
" His grave example constantly pursue."
Would he dissuade me? " Can you doubt," he cries,
" That equal ruin and dishonour rise
From such an action, when that scoundrel's name
Is branded with the flagrant marks of shame?"
A neighbour's funeral, with dire affright,
Checks the sick man's intemperate appetite;
So is the shame of others oft imprest
With wholesome terrors on the youthful breast.
Thus, pure from more pernicious crimes I live:
Some venial frailties you may well forgive,
For such I own I have; and yet even these,
A length of time, although by slow degrees,
A friend, whose candour freely may reprove,
Or my own reason, shall perhaps remove;
For in my bed, or in the colonnade
Sauntering, I call reflection to my aid.
" This was well done. Here happiness attends.
This conduct makes me pleasing to my friends.
Were that man's actions of a beauteous kind?
Oh! may I never be to such inclin'd!"
Thus, silently I talk my conduct o'er,
Or trifle with the Muse an idle hour;
For which, among my frailties, I demand
Forgiveness, and shall call a powerful band,
If you refuse, of poets to my aid
(Well fraught with numbers is the rhiming trade)
To force you, like the proselyting Jews,
To be, like us, a brother of the Muse.

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SATIRE V.

LEAVING imperial Rome, my course I steer
To poor Aricia, and its moderate cheer.
From all the Greeks, in rhetorician lore,
The prize of learning my companion bore.
To Forum-Appii thence we steer, a place
Stuff'd with rank boatmen, and with vintners base,
And laggard into two days' journey broke
What were but one to less-incumber'd folk:
The Appian road, however, yields most pleasure
To those who choose to travel at their leisure.
The water here was of so foul a stream
Against my stomach I a war proclaim,
And wait, though not with much good-humour wait,
While with keen appetites my comrades eat.
The Night o'er earth now spread her dusky shade,
And through the heavens her starry train display'd;
What time, between the slaves and boatmen rise
Quarrels of clamorous rout. The boatman cries,
"Step in, my masters;" when with open throat,
"Enough, you scoundrel; will you sink the boat?"
Thus, while the mule is harness'd, and we pay
Our freights, an hour in wrangling slips away.
The fenny frogs with croakings hoarse and deep,
And gnats, loud buzzing, drive away our sleep.
Drench'd in the lees of wine, the wat'ry swain
And passenger in loud alternate strain
Chant forth the absent fair, who warms his breast,
Till wearied passenger retires to rett.
Our clumsy bargeman sends his mule to graze,
And the tough cable to a rock belays,
Then snores supine; but when at rising light
Our boat stood still, up starts a hare-brain'd wight;
With sallow cudgel breaks the bargeman's pate,
And bangs the mule at a well-favour'd rate.
Thence onward labouring with a world of pain,
At ten, Feronia, we thy fountain gain:

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There land and bathe; then after dinner creep
Three tedious miles, and climb the rocky steep
Whence Anxur shines. Mæcenas was to meet
Cocceius here, to settle things of weight;
For they had oft in embassy been join'd,
And reconcil'd the masters of mankind.
Here while I bath'd my eyes with cooling ointment
They both arriv'd according to appointment;
Fontcius too, a man of worth approv'd,
And no man more by Antony belov'd.
Laughing we leave an entertainment rare,
The paltry pomp of Fundi's foolish mayor,
The scrivener Luscus; now with pride elate,
With incense fum'd, and big with robes of state.
From thence our wearied troop at Formiæ rests,
Murena's lodgers, and Fonteius' guests.
Next rising morn with double joy we greet,
For Plotius, Varius, Virgil here we meet:
Pure spirits these; the world no purer knows;
For none my heart with more affection glows:
How oft did we embrace! our joys how great!
For sure no blessing in the power of fate
Can be compar'd, in sanity of mind,
To friends of such companionable kind.
Near the Campanian bridge that night we lay,
Where commissaries our expense defray.
Early next morn to Capua we came;
Mæcenas goes to tennis; hurtful game
To a weak stomach, and to tender eyes,
So down to sleep with Virgil, Horace lies.
Then by Cocceius we were nobly treated,
Whose house above the Caudian tavern's seated.
And now, O Muse, in faithful numbers tell
The memorable squabble that befel,
When Messius and Sarmentus join'd in fight,
And whence descended each illustrious wight.
Messius, of high descent, from—Osci came;
His mistress might her slave Sarmentus claim.
From such fam'd ancestry our champions rise—
Hear me, thou horse-fac'd rogue, Sarmentus cries;
We laugh; when Messius, throwing up his head,
Accepts the challenge. O! Sarmentus said,

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If you can threaten now, what would you do,
Had not the horn been rooted out, that grew
Full in thy front? A gash, of deep disgrace,
Had stain'd the grisly honours of his face:
Then on his country's infamous disease,
And his own face, his ribaldry displays;
Begs him the one-eyed Cyclop's part to dance,
Since he nor mask nor tragic buskins wants.
Messius replied, in virulence of strain;
"Did you to Saturn consecrate your chain?
Though you were made a scrivener since your flight,
Yet that can never hurt your lady's right.
But, prithee, wherefore did you run away?
Methinks, a single pound of bread a day
Might such a sleek, thin-gutted rogue content:"
And thus the jovial length of night we spent.
At our next inn our host was almost burn'd,
While some lean thrushes at the fire he turn'd.
Through his old kitchen rolls the god of fire,
And to the roof the vagrant flames aspire.
But hunger all our terrors overcame,
We fly to save our meat, and quench the flame.
Apulia now my native mountains shows,
Where the north-wind burns frore, and parching blows;
Nor could we well have climb'd the steepy height,
Did we not at a neighbouring village bait,
Where from green wood the smouldering flames arise,
And with a smoky sorrow fill our eyes.
In chariots thence at a large rate we came
Eight leagues, and baited at a town, whose name
Cannot in verse and measures be exprest,
But may by marks and tokens well be guess'd.
Its water, nature's cheapest element,
Is bought and sold; its bread most excellent;
Which wary travellers provide with care,
And on their shoulders to Canusium bear,
Whose bread is gritty, and its wealthiest stream
Poor as the town's of unpoetic name.
Here Varius leaves us, and with tears he goes:
With equal tenderness our sorrow flows.
Onward to Rubi wearily we toil'd,
The journey long, the road with rain was spoil'd.

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To Barium, fam'd for fish, we reach'd next day,
The weather fairer, but much worse the way.
Then water-curs'd Egnatia gave us joke,
And laughter great, to hear the moon-struck folk
Assert, if incense on their altars lay,
Without the help of fire it melts away.
The sons of circumcision may receive
The wondrous tale, which I shall ne'er believe;
For I have better learn'd, in blissful ease
That the good gods enjoy immortal days,
Nor anxiously their native skies forsake,
When miracles the laws of nature break.
From thence our travels to Brundusium bend,
Where our long journey and my paper end.

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SATIRE VI.

TO MÆCENAS.

THOUGH, since the Lydians fill'd the Tuscan coasts,
No richer blood than yours Etruria boasts;
Though your great ancestors have armies led,
You don't, as many do, with scorn upbraid
The man of birth unknown, or turn the nose
On me, who from a race of slaves arose:
While you regard not, from what low degree
A man's descended, if his mind be free;
Convinc'd, that long before th' ignoble reign
And power of Tullius, from a servile strain
Full many rose for virtue high renown'd,
By worth ennobled, and with honours crown'd:
While he, who boasts that ancient race his own,
Which drove the haughty Tarquin from the throne,
Is vile and worthless in the people's eyes:
The people, who, you know, bestow the prize
To men most worthless, and, like slaves to fame,
With foolish reverence hail a titled name,
And, rapt, with awe-struck admiration gaze
When the long race its images displays.
  But how shall we, who differ far and wide
From the mere vulgar, this great point decide?
For grant, the crowd some high-birth'd scoundrel chuse,
And to the low-born man of worth refuse
(Because low-born) the honours of the state,
Shall we from thence their vice or virtue rate?
Were I expell'd the senate-house with scorn,
Justly, perhaps, because thus meanly born
I fondly wander'd from my native sphere;
Yet shall I with less real worth appear?
Chain'd to her beamy car, Fame drags along
The mean, the great, an undistinguish'd throng.
  Poor Tillius, when compell'd in luckless hour
To quit your purple robe and tribune's power,

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A larger share of envy was thy fate,
Which had been lessen'd in a private state.
For in black sandals when a coxcomb's drest,
When floats the robe impurpled down his breast,
Instant, "What man is this?" he round him hears,
"And who his father?" As when one appears
Sick of your fever, Barrus, to desire
That all the world his beauty should admire,
Anxious our girls inquire, "What mien and air,
What leg and foot he has, what teeth and hair!"
So he, who promises to guard the state,
The gods, the temples, and th' imperial seat,
Makes every mortal ask his father's name,
And not less curious of his mother's fame.
"And shall a Syrian's son, like you, presume
To hurl the free-born citizens of Rome
From the Tarpeïan rock's tremendous height,
Or to the hangman Cadmus give their fate?"

Tillius.

My colleague sits below me one degree;
For Novius, like my father, was made free.

Horace.

Shall you for this a true Messala seem,
And rise a Paulus in your own esteem?
But when two hundred waggons crowd the street,
And three long funerals in procession meet,
Beyond the fifes and horns his voice he raises,
And sure such strength of lungs a wondrous praise is.
As for myself, a freed-man's son confest,
A freed-man's son, the public scorn and jest,
That now with you I joy the social hour,
That once a Roman legion own'd my power;
But though they envied my command in war,
Justly perhaps, yet sure 'tis different far
To gain your friendship, where no servile art,
Where only men of merit claim a part.
Nor yet to chance this happiness I owe;
Friendship like yours it had not to bestow.
First, my best Virgil, then my Varius told,
Among my friends what character I hold:
When introduc'd, in few and faltering words
(Such as an infant modesty affords)

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I did not tell you my descent was great,
Or that I wander'd round my country-seat
On a proud steed in richer pastures bred:
But what I really was, I frankly said.
Short was your answer, in your usual strain;
I take my leave, nor wait on you again,
Till, nine months past, engag'd and bid to hold
A place among your nearer friends enroll'd.
An honour this, methinks, of nobler kind,
That innocent of heart and pure of mind,
Though with no titled birth, I gain'd his love,
Whose judgment can discern, whose choice approve.
If some few, venial faults deform my soul
(Like a fair face when spotted with a mole),
If none with avarice justly brand my fame,
With sordidness, or deeds too vile to name:
If pure and innocent: if dear (forgive
These little praises) to my friends I live,
My father was the cause, who, though maintain'd
By a lean farm but poorly, yet disdain'd
The country schoolmaster, to whose low care
The mighty captain sent his high-born heir,
With satchel, copy-book, and pelf to pay
The wretched teacher on th' appointed day.
To Rome by this bold father was I brought,
To learn those arts which well-born youth are taught,
So drest and so attended, you would swear
I was some senator's expensive heir:
Himself my guardian, of unblemish'd truth,
Among my tutors would attend my youth,
And thus preserv'd my chastity of mind
(That prime of virtue in its highest kind)
Not only pure from guilt, but ev'n the shame
That might with vile suspicion hurt my fame;
Nor fear'd to be reproach'd, although my fate
Should fix my fortune in some meaner state,
From which some trivial perquisites arise,
Or make me, like himself, collector of excise.
For this my heart, far from complaining, pays
A larger debt of gratitude and praise;
Nor, while my senses hold, shall I repent
Of such a father, nor with pride resent,

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As many do, th' involunt'ry disgrace,
Not to be born of an illustrious race.
But not with theirs my sentiments agree,
Or language; for, if nature should decree,
That we from any stated point might live
Our former years, and to our choice should give
The sires, to whom we wish'd to be allied,
Let others choose to gratify their pride;
While I, contented with my own, resign
The titled honours of an ancient line.
This may be madness in the people's eyes,
But, in your judgment, not, perhaps, unwise;
That I refuse to bear the pomp of state,
Unus'd and much unequal to the weight.
  Instant a larger fortune must be made;
To purchase votes my low addresses paid;
Whether a jaunt or journey I propose,
With me a crowd of new companions goes,
While, anxious to complete a length of train,
Domestics, horses, chariots I maintain.
But now, as chance or pleasure is my guide,
Upon my bob-tail'd mule alone I ride.
Gall'd is his crupper with my wallet's weight;
His shoulder shows his rider's awkward seat.
  Yet no penurious vileness e'er shall stain
My name, as when, great Prætor, with your train
Of five poor slaves, you carry where you dine
Your travelling kitchen, and your flask of wine.
  Thus have I greater blessings in my power,
Than you, proud senator, and thousands more.
Alone I wander, as by fancy led,
I cheapen herbs, or ask the price of bread;
I listen, while diviners tell their tale,
Then homeward hasten to my frugal meal,
Herbs, pulse, and pancakes; each a separate plate;
While three domestics at my supper wait.
A bowl on a white marble-table stands,
Two goblets, and a ewer to wash my hands;
An hallow'd cup of true Campanian clay,
My pure libations to the gods to pay.
I then retire to rest, nor anxious fear
Before dread Marsyas early to appear,

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Whose very statue swears it cannot brook
The meanness of that slave-born judge's look.
I sleep till ten; then take a walk, or choose
A book, perhaps, or trifle with the Muse;
For cheerful exercise and manly toil
Anoint my body with the pliant oil,
But not with such as Natta's, when he vamps
His filthy limbs, and robs the public lamps.
  But when the sun pours down his fiercer fire,
And bids me from the toilsome sport retire,
I haste to bathe, then decently regale
My craving stomach with a frugal meal,
Enough to nourish nature for a day,
Then trifle my domestic hours away.
  Such is the life from bad ambition free;
Such comfort has the man low-born like me;
With which I feel myself more truly blest,
Than if my sires the quæstor's power possess'd.

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SATIRE VII.

HOW mongrel Persius, in his wrathful mood,
That outlaw'd wretch, Rupilius King, pursu'd
With poisonous filth, and venom all his own,
To barbers and to blear-eyed folk is known.
Persius had wealth by foreign traffic gain'd,
And a vexatious suit with King maintain'd.
Presumptuous, vain, and obstinate the wight,
Conquering even King in virulence of spite;
In bitterness of speech outstripp'd the wind,
And left the swift-tongued Barrus far behind.
Now to the King returns our wandering tale,
When all fair means of reconcilement fail
(For men are obstinate when war's proclaim'd,
As they with inward courage are inflam'd;
When Hector and Achilles fierce engag'd,
Dire was the conflict, and to death they rag'd:
And why? because the gallant thirst of fame,
The love of glory, was in both extreme.
But if a quarrel between cowards rise,
Or between chiefs of less heroic size,
Glaucus to Diomed is forc'd to yield,
The dastard buys his peace, and quits the field).
What time o'er Asia with prætorial sway
Great Brutus rul'd, began this dire affray.
Persius and King, intrepid pair, engage
(More equal champions never mounted stage),
And now they rush impetuous into court,
Fine was the sight, and delicate the sport.
Persius begins; loud bursts of laughter rise;
He praises Brutus, Brutus, to the skies,
"Brutus, like Sol, o'er Asia pours the day;
His friends are stars, and healthful is their ray,
Except the King; he like the dog-star reigns,
That dog of heaven, detested by the swains."
Thus rush'd he onward like a winter-flood,
That tears its banks, and sweeps away the wood.

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To this impetuous bitterness of tide
The King with equal virulence replied.
A vine-dresser he was, of rustic tone,
Whom oft the traveller was forc'd to own
Invincible; with clamorous voice opprest,
When Cuckow, cuckow, was the standing jest.
But, with Italian vinegar imbued,
The sour-tongued mongrel the dispute renew'd;
"Let me conjure thee, by the powers divine,
Since 'tis the glory, Brutus, of thy line
To slaughter Kings, be this thy glorious deed,
That this same King beneath thy vengeance bleed."

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SATIRE VIII.

IN days of yore our godship stood
A very worthless log of wood.
The joiner doubting, or to shape us
Into a stool, or a Priapus,
At length resolv'd, for reasons wise,
Into a god to bid me rise;
And now to birds and thieves I stand
A terror great. With ponderous hand,
And something else as red as scarlet,
I fright away each filching varlet.
The birds, that view with awful dread
The reeds, fast stuck into my head,
Far from the garden take their flight,
Nor on the trees presume to light.
In coffins vile the herd of slaves
Were hither brought to crowd their graves;
And once in this detested ground
A common tomb the vulgar found;
Buffoons and spendthrifts, vile and base,
Together rotted here in peace.
A thousand feet the front extends,
Three hundred deep in rear it bends,
And yonder column plainly shows
No more unto its heirs it goes.
But now we breathe a purer air,
And walk the sunny terrace fair,
Where once the ground with bones was white,
With human bones, a ghastly sight!
But, oh! nor thief, nor savage beast,
That us'd these gardens to infest,
E'er gave me half such care and pains
As they, who turn poor people's brains
With venom'd drugs and magic lay—
These I can never fright away;

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For when the beauteous queen of night
Up-lifts her head adorn'd with light,
Hither they come, pernicious crones!
To gather poisonous herbs and bones.
Canidia with dishevel'd hair
(Black was her robe, her feet were bare)
With Sagana, infernal dame!
Her elder sister, hither came.
With yellings dire they fill'd the place,
And hideous pale was either's face.
Soon with their nails they scrap'd the ground,
And fill'd a magic trench profound
With a black lamb's thick-streaming gore,
Whose members with their teeth they tore,
That they may charm the sprites to tell
Some curious anecdotes from hell.
The beldams then two figures brought;
Of wool and wax the forms were wrought;
The woollen was erect and tall,
And scourg'd the waxen image small,
Which in a suppliant, servile mood
With dying air just gasping stood.
On Hecate one beldam calls;
The other to the Furies bawls,
While serpents crawl along the ground,
And hell-born bitches howl around.
The blushing Moon, to shun the sight,
Behind a tomb withdrew her light.
Oh! if I lie, may ravens shed
Their ordure on my sacred head!
May thieves and prostitutes and rakes
Beneath my nose erect a jakes!
Not to be tedious, or repeat
How flats and sharps in concert meet,
With which the ghosts and hags maintain
A dialogue of passing strain;
Or how, to hide the tooth of snake
And beard of wolf, the ground they break;
Or how the fire of magic seiz'd
The waxen form, and how it blaz'd;

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Mark! how my vengeance I pursu'd
For all I heard, for all I view'd.
  Loud as a bladder bursts its wind
Dreadful I thunder'd from behind.
To town they scamper'd struck with fear,
This lost her teeth, and that her hair.
They dropp'd the bracelets from their arms,
Their incantations, herbs and charms;
Whoe'er had seen them in their flight
Had burst with laughing at the sight.

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SATIRE IX.

MUSING, as wont, on this and that,
Such trifles, as I know not what,
When late the street I saunter'd through,
A wight, whose name I hardly knew,
Approaching pertly makes me stand,
And thus accosts me, hand in hand:
"How do you do, my sweetest man?"
Quoth I, As well as mortal can,
And my best wishes yours—when he
Would follow—What's your will with me?
"That one of your profound discerning
Should know me: I'm a man of learning."—
Why, then, be sure upon that score
You merit my regard the more.
Impatient to discard the fop,
One while I run, another stop,
And whisper, as he presses near,
Some nothing in my servant's ear.
But while at every pore I sweated,
And thus in muttering silence fretted—
"Bolanus, happy in a skull
Of proof, impenetrably dull,
O for a portion of thy brains"—
He on the town and streets and lanes
His prating, praising talent tried,
And, when I answer'd not, he cried,
"Ay, 'tis too plain; you can't deceive me,
You miserably wish to leave me,
But I shall never quit you so:
Command me—whither would you go?"—
You do me honour—but, in short,
There's not the least occasion for't.
I visit one—to cut the strife,
You never saw him in your life;
Nor would I lead you such a round—
He lives above a mile of ground

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Beyond the Tiber—"Never talk
Of distance, for I love a walk.
I never have the least enjoyment
In idleness: I want employment.
Come on; I must and will attend
Your person to your journey's end."
  Like vicious ass, that fretting bears
A wicked load, I hang my ears;
While he, renewing his civilities,
"If well I know my own abilities,
Not Viscus, though your friend of yore,
Not Varius could engage you more;
For who can write melodious lays
With greater elegance or ease?
Who moves with smoother grace his limbs
While through the mazy dance he swims?
Besides, I sing to that degree,
Hermogenes might envy me."
  Have you no mother, sister, friends,
Whose welfare on your health depends?—
"Not one; I saw them all by turns
Securely settled in their urns."
Thrice happy they, secure from pain!
And I thy victim now remain:
Dispatch me; for my goody-nurse
Early presag'd this heavy curse:
She conn'd it by the sieve and shears,
And now it falls upon my ears—
Nor poison fell, with ruin stor'd,
Nor horrid point of hostile sword,
Nor pleurisy, nor asthma-cough,
Nor cripple-gout, shall cut him off:
A noisy tongue, and babbling breath,
Shall tease and talk my child to death.
But if he would avert his fate,
When he arrives at man's estate,
Let him avoid, as he would hanging,
Your folks long-winded in haranguing.
  We came to Vesta's about ten,
And he was bound in person then
To stand a suit, or by the laws
He must have forfeited his cause.

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"Sir, if you love me, step aside
A little into court," he cried.
If I can stand it out, quoth I,
Or know the practice, let me die:
Besides, I am oblig'd to go
Precisely to the place you know.—
"I am divided what to do,
Whether to leave my cause, or you."—
Sir, I beseech you spare your pains.
Your humble servant——"By no means."
I follow, for he leads the way;
'Tis death; but captives must obey.
Then he renews his plaguy strain, as,
"How stands your friendship with Mæcenas?"
For friendships, he contracts but few,
And shows in that his judgment true.—
"Commend me to your brother-bard,
No man has play'd a surer card.
But you should have a man of art;
One who might act an under-part
If you were pleas'd to recommend
The man I mention, to your friend,
Sir, may I never see the light
But you shall rout your rivals quite!"—
We live not there, as you suppose,
On such precarious terms as those:
No family was ever purer;
From such infections none securer.
It never hurts me in the least,
That one excels in wealth, or taste;
Each person there of course inherits
A place proportion'd to his merits—
"'Tis wonderful, and, to be brief,
A thing almost beyond belief."—
But, whether you believe, or no,
The matter is exactly so.
"This adds but fuel to the fire,
The more you kindle my desire
To kiss his hand, and pay my court."—
Assail, and you shall take the fort.
Such is the vigour of your wit,
And he is one that can submit;

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The first attack is therefore nice,
The matter is to break the ice.
"I sha'n't be wanting there," he cried,
"I'll bribe his servants to my side;
To-day shut out, still onward press,
And watch the seasons of access;
In private haunt, in public meet,
Salute, escort him through the street.
There's nothing gotten in this life,
Without a world of toil and strife!"
While thus he racks my tortur'd ears,
A much-lov'd friend of mine appears,
Aristius Fuscus, one who knew
My sweet companion through and through.
We stop, exchanging "so and so:"
"Whence come, and whither do you go?"
I then began in woful wise
To nod my head, distort my eyes,
And pull his renegado sleeve,
That he would grant me a reprieve;
But he was absent all the while,
Malicious with a leering smile.
Provok'd at his dissimulation,
I burst with spleen and indignation.
"I know not what you had to tell
In private.'—"I remember well:
But shall a day of business choose,
This is the Sabbath of the Jews;
You would not thus offend the leathern-
curtail'd assemblies of the brethren"—
'I have no scruples, by your leave,
On that account.'—"But, sir, I have:
I am a little superstitious,
Like many of the crowd capricious:
Forgive me, if it be a crime,
And I shall talk another time."—
Oh! that so black a sun should rise!
Away the cruel creature flies,
And leaves me panting for my life
Aghast beneath the butcher's knife.
At last, by special act of grace,
The plaintiff meets him face to face,

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And bawls as loud as he could bellow:
"Ha! whither now, thou vilest fellow?
Sir, will you witness to my capture?"
I signified, I would with rapture;
And then, to magnify the sport,
He drags my prattler into court;
And thus, amidst the noise and rabble,
Apollo sav'd me in the squabble.

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SATIRE X.

YES, I did say, Lucilius' verses roll'd
In ruder style precipitately bold;
Who reads Lucilius with so fond an eye,
Partially fond, who can this charge deny?
But, that with wit he lash'd a vicious age,
He's frankly prais'd in the same equal page.
Should I grant more, I may as well admit
Laberius' farces elegantly writ.
'Tis not enough a bursting laugh to raise,
Yet ev'n this talent may deserve its praise:
Concise your diction; let your sense be clear,
Nor with a weight of words fatigue the ear.
Now change from grave to gay with ready art,
Now play the orator's or poet's part;
In raillery assume a gayer air,
Discreetly hide your strength, your vigour spare,
For ridicule shall frequently prevail,
And cut the knot, when graver reasons fail.
The ancient writers of the comic stage
Our imitation here may well engage,
Though read not by Tigellius, smooth of face,
Or yonder ape, of horrible grimace.
Calvus, Catullus better suit their vein,
Whose wanton songs they chant in tuneful strain.
But yet a mighty feat it must be thought—
"His motley page with Greek and Latin's wrought!"
Blockheads! who think it wonderful or hard,
So oft perform'd by yonder Rhodian bard.
"But languages each other may refine
(As Chian softens the Falernian wine)
At least in verse." But say, my rhiming friend,
Were you that thief Petillius to defend,
While other lawyers sweated in the cause,
And urg'd in pure Latinity the laws:
While wondering crowds upon their language hung,
Would you, forgetful of your native tongue,

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In foreign words and broken phrases speak,
The half-form'd jargon of a mongrel Greek?
In Latium born, I once propos'd to write
Some Grecian versicles: in deep of night
(When dreams, they say, are true) Rome's founder rose,
And awful spake, "You may as well propose
To carry timber to a wood, as throng
The crowded writers of the Grecian song."
Let swelling Furius on th' affrighted stage
Murder poor Memnon, or in muddy rage
Describe the head of Rhine: in idle vein
I write, what never shall presume to gain
The prize, where Metius high in judgment sits
To hear the labours of contending wits;
Or where the people with applauding hands
The well-wrought scene repeatedly demands.
Of all mankind, in light and easy vein
Fundanius best can paint the comic scene,
The wily harlot, and the slave, who join
To wipe the miser of his darling coin.
Pollio in pure Iambic numbers sings
The tragic deeds of heroes and of kings;
While Varius in sublime and ardent vein
Supports the grandeur of the Epic strain.
On Virgil all the rural Muses smile.
Smooth flow his lines, and elegant his style.
Satire alone remain'd, no easy strain,
Which Varro, and some others, tried in vain,
While I, perhaps, some slight success may claim,
Though far inferior to th' inventor's fame:
Nor from his head shall I presume to tear
That sacred wreath, he well deserves to wear.
I said, his verse in muddy rapture flows,
And more his errors than his beauties shows;
But, prithee, you that boast a critic's name,
Don't you sometimes the mighty Homer blame?
Does not Lucilius, though of gentle strain,
Correct ev'n Accius, and reform his scene?
And in his pleasantry old Ennius rate,
When his dull lines want dignity and weight?
Yet, when he speaks of his own right to fame,
Confesses frankly their superior claim.

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What then forbids our equal right to know
Why his own verses inharmonious flow?
Or whether in his subject lies the fault,
Or in himself, that they're not higher wrought,
Than if the art of verse were to confine
In ten low feet a cold, dull length of line,
Content his rhiming talents to display
In twice an hundred verses twice a day.
Such, Cassius, thy rapidity of song,
Which like a foaming river pour'd along,
Whose volum'd works (if Fame be not a liar)
Kindled around thy corpse the funeral fire.
Lucilius rallies with politer ease
Than all the rhiming tribe of ancient days,
Nay more correct than him (I frankly own)
Who form'd this kind of verse, to Greece unknown:
Yet, were he fated to the present age,
He sure had blotted the redundant page;
Prun'd all luxuriant excellence away,
And, while he labour'd o'er th' instructive lay,
Would often scratch his head in dull despair,
And to the quick his nails bemusing tear.
Would you a reader's just esteem engage?
Correct with frequent care the blotted page;
Nor strive the wonder of the crowd to raise,
But the few better judges learn to please.
Be thine, fond madman, some vile school to choose,
Where to repeat the labours of your Muse,
While I, like hiss'd Arbuscula unaw'd,
Despise the vulgar, since the knights applaud.
Say, shall that bug Pantilius move my spleen?
Shall I be tortur'd, when a wretch obscene,
Or foolish Fannius, for a sordid treat
With sweet Tigellius, shall my verses rate?
Let Plotius, Varius, and Mæcenas deign
With Virgil, Valgius, to approve my strain;
Let good Octavius even endure my lays;
Let Fuscus read, and either Viscus praise;
Let me, with no mean arts to purchase fame,
Pollio, Messala, and his brother name;
Let Bibulus and Servius be my own,
And Furnius for a critic's candour known;

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Among my learned friends are many more,
Whose names I pass in modest silence o'er:
These I can wish to smile; enjoy their praise;
Hope to delight, and grieve if I displease.
Begone, Demetrius, to thy lovesome train
Of minstrel scholars, and in sighing strain,
With soft Hermogenes these rhimes deplore—
Haste, boy, transcribe me this one satire more.

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SATIRES.

BOOK II.

SATIRE I.

HORACE. TREBATIUS.

Horace.

THERE are, to whom too poignant I appear;
Beyond the laws of satire too severe.
My lines are weak, unsinew'd, others say—
"A man might spin a thousand such a day."
What shall I do, Trebatius?

Trebatius.

Write no more.

Horace.

What! give the dear delight of scribbling o'er?

Trebatius.

Yes.

Horace.

Let me die but your advice were best.
But, sir, I cannot sleep; I cannot rest.

Trebatius.

Swim o'er the Tiber, if you want to sleep,
Or the dull sense in t'other bottle steep;
If you must write, to Cæsar tune your lays,
Indulge your genius, and your fortune raise.

Horace.

Oh! were I equal to the glorious theme,
Bristled with spears his iron war should gleam:
A thousand darts should pierce the hardy Gaul,
And from his horse the wounded Parthian fall.

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Trebatius.

Then give his peaceful virtues forth to Fame;
His fortitude and justice be your theme.

Horace.

Yes. I will hold the daring theme in view,
Perhaps hereafter your advice pursue.
But Cæsar never will your Flaccus hear;
A languid panegyric hurts his ear.
Too strongly guarded from the poet's lays,
He spurns the flatterer, and his saucy praise.

Trebatius.

Better even this, than cruelly defame,
And point buffoons and villains out by name,
Sure to be hated even by those you spare,
Who hate in just proportion as they fear.

Horace.

Tell me, Trebatius, are not all mankind
To different pleasures, different whims inclin'd?
Millonius dances when his head grows light,
And the dim lamp shines double to his sight.
The twin-born brothers in their sports divide;
Pollux loves boxing; Castor joys to ride.
Indulge me then in this my sole delight,
Like great and good Lucilius let me write.
  Behold him frankly to his book impart,
As to a friend, the secrets of his heart:
To write was all his aim, too heedless bard!
And well or ill, unworthy his regard.
Hence the old man stands open to your view,
Though with a careless hand the piece he drew.
  His steps I follow in pursuit of Fame,
Whether Lucania or Appulia claim
The honour of my birth; for on the lands,
By Sammites once possest, Venusium stands,
A forward barrier, as old tales relate,
To stop the course of war, and guard the state.
  Let this digression, as it may, succeed—
No honest man shall by my satire bleed;
It guards me like a sword, and safe it lies
Within the sheath, till villains round me rise.
  Dread King and Father of the mortal race,
Behold me, harmless bard, how fond of peace!

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And may all kinds of mischief-making steel
In rust, eternal rust, thy vengeance feel!
But who provokes me, or attacks my fame,
" Better not touch me, friend," I loud exclaim,
His eyes shall weep the folly of his tongue,
By laughing crowds in rueful ballad sung.
Th' informer Cervius threatens with the laws;
Turius your judge, you surely lose your cause:
Are you the object of Canidia's hate?
Drugs, poisons, incantations, are your fate:
For powerful Nature to her creatures shows
With various arms to terrify their foes.
The wolf with teeth, the bull with horns can fight;
Whence, but from instinct, and an inward light?
His long-liv'd mother trusts to Scæva's care—

Trebatius.

No deed of blood his pious hand could dare.

Horace.

Wondrous indeed! that bulls ne'er strive to fly,
Nor wolves with desperate horns engage in fight.
No mother's blood the gentle Scæva spills,
But with a draught of honey'd poison kills.
Then, whether age my peaceful hours attend,
Or Death his sable pinions round me bend:
Or rich, or poor: at Rome; to exile driven:
Whatever lot by powerful Fate is given:
Yet write I will.

Trebatius.

O boy, thy fate is sped,
And short thy days. Some lord shall strike thee dead
With freezing look—

Horace.

What! in his honest page
When good Lucilius lash'd a vicious age,
From conscious villains tore the mask away,
And stripp'd them naked to the glare of day,
Were Lælius or his friend (whose glorious name
From conquer'd Carthage deathless rose to fame)
Were they displeas'd, when villains and their crimes
Were cover'd o'er with infamy and rhimes?
The factious demagogue he made his prize,
And durst the people tribe by tribe chastise;

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Yet true to virtue, and to virtue's friends,
To them alone with reverence he bends.
When Scipio's virtue, and, of milder vein,
When Lælius' wisdom, from the busy scene,
And crowd of life, the vulgar and the great,
Could with their favourite satirist retreat,
Lightly they laugh'd at many an idle jest,
Until their frugal feast of herbs was drest.
What though with great Lucilius I disclaim
All saucy rivalship of birth or fame,
Spite of herself even Envy must confess,
That I the friendship of the great possess,
And, if she dare attempt my honest fame,
Shall break her teeth against my solid name.
This is my plea; on this I rest my cause—
What says my counsel, learned in the laws?

Trebatius.

Your case is clearer; yet let me advise;
For sad mishaps from ignorance arise.
Behold the pains and penalties decreed
To libellers—

Horace.

To libellers indeed.
But if with truth his characters he draws,
Even Cæsar shall support the poet's cause;
The formal process shall be turn'd to sport,
And you dismiss'd with honour by the court.

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SATIRE II.

WHAT, and how great the virtue, friends, to live
On what the gods with frugal bounty give
(Nor are they mine, but sage Ofellus' rules,
Of mother-wit, and wise without the schools)
Come learn with me, but learn before ye dine,
Ere with luxurious pomp the table shine;
Ere yet its madding splendors are display'd,
That dull the sense, and the weak mind mislead.
Yet why before we dine? I'll tell ye, friends,
A judge, when brib'd, but ill to truth attends.
Pursue the chase: th' unmanag'd courser rein:
Or, if the Roman war ill suit thy vein
To Grecian revels form'd, at tennis play,
Or at the manly discus waste the day;
With vigour hurl it through the yielding air
(The sport shall make the labour less severe):
Then, when the loathings, that from surfeits rise,
Are quell'd by toil, a homely meal despise;
Then the Falernian grape with pride disclaim,
Unless with honey we correct its flame.
Your butler strolls abroad; the winter'd sea
Defends its fish; but you can well allay
The stomach's angry roar with bread and salt—
Whence can this rise? you ask; from whence the fault?
In you consists the pleasure of the treat,
Not in the price or flavour of the meat.
Let exercise give relish to the dish,
Since nor the various luxuries of fish,
Nor foreign wild-fowl can delight the pale,
Surfeit-swoln guest; yet I shall ne'er prevail
To make our men of taste a pullet choose,
And the gay peacock with its train refuse;
For the rare bird at mighty price is sold,
And lo! what wonders from its tail unfold!
But can these whims a higher gusto raise,
Unless you eat the plumage that you praise?

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Or do its glories, when 'tis boil'd, remain?
No; 'tis th' unequall'd beauty of its train
Deludes your eye, and charms you to the feast,
For hens and peacocks are alike in taste.
  But say, by what discernment are you taught
To know, that this voracious pike was caught
Where the full river's lenient waters glide,
Or where the bridges break the rapid tide:
In the mid ocean, or where Tiber pays
With broader course his tribute to the seas?
  Madly you praise the mullet's three pound weight,
And yet you stew it piece-meal ere you eat;
Your eye deceives you; wherefore else dislike
The natural greatness of a full-grown pike,
Yet in a mullet so much joy express?
"Pikes are by nature large, and mullets less."
  Give me, the harpy-throated glutton cries,
In a large dish a mullet's largest size:
Descend, ye southern winds, propitious haste,
And dress his dainties for this man of taste.
And yet it needs not; for when such excess
Shall his o'er-jaded appetite oppress,
The new-caught turbot's tainted ere he eat,
And bitter herbs are a delicious treat.
  But still some ancient poverty remains;
The egg and olive yet a place maintains
At great men's tables; nor, till late, the fame
Of a whole sturgeon damn'd a prætor's name.
  Did ocean then a smaller turbot yield?
The towering stork did once in safety build
Her airy nest, nor was the turbot caught,
Till your great prætor better precepts taught.
  Tell them, that roasted cormorants are a feast,
Our docile youth obey the man of taste;
But sage Ofellus marks a decent mean
A sordid and a frugal meal between;
For a profuse expense in vain you shun,
If into sordid avarice you run.
  Avidienus, who by public fame
Was called *the dog*, and merited the name,
Wild cornels, olives five years old, devour'd,
Nor, till his wine was turn'd, his pure libations pour'd.

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When rob'd in white he mark'd with festal mirth
His day of marriage, or his hour of birth,
From his one bottle, of some two pound weight,
With oil, of execrable stench, replete,
With his own hand he dropp'd his cabbage o'er,
But spar'd his oldest vinegar no more.
How shall the wise decide, thus urg'd between
The proverb's ravening wolf and dog obscene?
Let him avoid the equal wretchedness
Of sordid filth, or prodigal excess;
Nor his poor slaves like old Albucius rate,
When he gives orders for some curious treat:
Nor yet, like Nævius, carelessly unclean,
His guests with greasy water entertain.
This too is vile. Now mark, what blessings flow
From temperate meals: and first, they can bestow
That prime of blessings, health; for you'll confess
That various meats the stomach must oppress,
If you reflect how light, how well you were,
When plain and simple was your cheerful fare;
But roast, and boil'd, when you promiscuous eat,
When fowl and shell-fish in confusion meet,
Sweets, turn'd to choler, with cold phlegm engage,
And civil war in the rack'd stomach wage.
Behold how pale the sated guests arise
From suppers, puzzled with varieties!
The body too, with yesterday's excess
Burthen'd and tir'd, shall the pure soul depress;
Weigh down this portion of celestial birth,
This breath of God, and fix it to the earth.
Who down to sleep from a short supper lies,
Can to the next day's business vigorous rise,
Or jovial wander (when the circling year
Brings back some festal day) to better cheer,
Or when his wasted strength he would restore,
When years approach, and age's feeble hour
A softer treatment claim. But if in prime
Of youth and health you take before your time
The luxuries of life, where is their aid
When age or sickness shall your strength invade?
Our fathers lov'd (and yet they had a nose)
A tainted boar; but I believe they chose

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The mouldy fragments with a friend to eat,
Rather than eat it whole themselves, and sweet.
Oh! that the earth, when vigorous and young,
Had borne me this heroic race among!
Do you the voice of Fame with pleasure hear?
(Sweeter than verse it charms the human ear)
Behold, what infamy and ruin rise
From a large dish, where the large turbot lies!
Your friends, your neighbours all your folly hate,
You hate yourself, in vain, and curse your fate,
When, though you wish for death, you want the pelf
To purchase even a rope to hang yourself.
"These precepts well may wretched Trausius rate:
But why to me? So large is my estate,
And such an ample revenue it brings
To satiate even the avarice of kings."
Then why not better use this proud excess
Of worthless wealth? Why lives in deep distress
A man unworthy to be poor, or why
The temples of the gods in ruins lie?
Why not of such a massy treasure spare
To thy dear country, wretch, a moderate share?
Shalt thou alone no change of fortune know?
Thou future laughter to thy deadliest foe!
But who, with conscious spirit self-secure,
A change of fortune better shall endure?
He, who with such variety of food
Pampers his passions, and inflames his blood,
Or he, contented with his little store,
And wisely cautious of the future hour,
Who in the time of peace with prudent care
Shall for th' extremities of war prepare?
But, deeper to impress this useful truth,
I knew the sage Ofellus in my youth
Living, when wealthy, at no larger rate
Than in his present more contracted state.
I saw the hardy hireling till the ground
('Twas once his own estate); and while around
His cattle graz'd, and children listening stood,
The cheerful swain his pleasing tale pursued.
On working days I had no idle treat,
But a smok'd leg of pork and greens I eat;

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Yet when arrived some long-expected guest,
Or rainy weather gave an hour of rest,
If a kind neighbour then a visit paid,
An entertainment more profuse I made;
Though with a kid, or pullet, well content,
Ne'er for luxurious fish to Rome I sent;
With nuts and figs I crown'd the cheerful board,
The largest that the season could afford.
The social glass went round with cheerfulness,
And our sole rule was to avoid excess.
Our due libations were to Ceres paid,
To bless our corn, and fill the rising blade,
While the gay wine dispell'd each anxious care,
And smooth'd the wrinkled forehead too severe.
Let Fortune rage, and new disorders make,
From such a life how little can she take!
Or have we liv'd at a more frugal rate
Since this new stranger seiz'd on our estate?
Nature will no perpetual heir assign,
Or make the farm his property or mine.
He turn'd us out: but follies all his own,
Or law-suits, and their knaveries unknown,
Or, all his follies and his law-suits past,
Some long-liv'd heir shall turn him out at last.
The farm, once mine, now bears Umbrenus' nam
The use alone, not property we claim:
Then be not with your present lot deprest,
And meet the future with undaunted breast.

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SATIRE III.

DAMASIPPUS. HORACE.

Damasippus.

IF hardly once a quarter of a year,
So idle grown, a single sheet appear;
If angry at yourself, that sleep and wine
Enjoy your hours, while anxious to refine
Your labours past, no more your voice you raise
To aught, that may deserve the public praise,
What shall be done? When Saturn's jovial feast
Seem'd too luxuriant to your sober taste,
Hither you fled. Then try the pleasing strain:
Come on: begin.

Horace.

Alas! 'tis all in vain:
While I with impotence of rage abuse
My harmless pens, the guiltless walls accuse;
Walls, that seem'd rais'd in angry heaven's despite,
The curse of peevish poets, when they write.

Damasippus.

And yet you threaten'd something wondrous great,
When you should warm you in your country seat.
Why crowd the volumes of the Grecian sage,
Rang'd with the writers of the comic stage?
Think you the wrath of envy to appease,
Your virtue lost in idleness and ease?
Unhappy bard, to sure contempt you run;
Then learn the Siren Indolence to shun,
Or poorly be content to lose the fame,
Which your past hours of better life might claim.

Horace.

Sage Damasippus, may the powers divine,
For this same excellent advice of thine,
Give thee a barber, in their special grace,
To nurse your beard, that wisdom of the face!
Yet, prithee, tell me whence I'm so well known.

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Damasippus.

When I had lost all business of my own,
And at th' Exchange my ship-wreck'd fortunes broke,
I minded the affairs of other folk.
In rare antiques full curious was my taste;
Here the rude chissel's rougher strokes I trac'd;
In flowing brass a vicious hardness found,
Or bought a statue for five hundred pound,
A perfect connoisseur. At gainful rate,
I purchas'd gardens, or a mansion-seat.
Thus, through the city I was known to fame,
And Mercury's favourite my public name.

Horace.

I knew your illness, and amaz'd beheld
Your sudden cure.

Damasippus.

A new disease expell'd
My old disorder: as when changing pains
Fly to the stomach from the head and reins.
Thus the lethargic, starting from his bed,
In boxing phrensy broke his doctor's head.

Horace.

Spare but this phrensy, use me as you please—

Damasippus.

Good sir, don't triumph in your own disease.
For all are fools or mad, as well as you,
At least, if what Stertinius says, be true,
Whose wondrous precepts I with transport heard,
What time he bade me nurse this reverend beard,
Cheerful from the Fabrician bridge depart,
And with the words of comfort fill'd my heart.
For when, my fortune lost, resolv'd I stood,
Covering my head, to plunge into the flood,
Propitious he address'd me—

Stertinius.

Friend, take heed,
Nor wrong yourself by this unworthy deed.
'Tis but a vicious modesty to fear
Among the mad a madman to appear.
But listen heedful first, while I explain
What madness is, what error of the brain;
And if in you alone appear its power,
Then bravely perish: I shall say no more.

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Whom vicious follies, or whom falsehood, blind,
Are by the Stoics held of madding kind.
All but the wise are by this process bound,
The subject nations, and the monarch crown'd,
And they who call you fool, with equal claim
May plead an ample title to the name.
When in a wood we leave the certain way
One error fools us, though we various stray:
Some to the left, some turn to t'other side:
So he, who dares thy madness to deride,
Though you may frankly own yourself a fool,
Behind him trails his mark of ridicule.
For various follies fill the human breast,
As, with unreal terrors when possest,
A wretch in superstitious phrensy cries,
"Lo! in the plain, fires, rocks, and rivers, rise!"
A different madness, though not less, inspires
The fool, who rushes wild through streams and fires;
His mother, sister, father, friends and wife,
Cry out, in vain, Ah! yet preserve thy life;
That head-long ditch! how dreadful it appears!
That hanging precipice! No more he hears,
Than drunken Fufius lately at the play,
Who fairly slept Ilione away,
While the full pit, with clamorous thousands, cries,
'Awake, dear mother, to my aid, arise.'
Now listen while full clearly I maintain
Such is the vulgar error of the brain.
Some rare antique, suppose, your madness buys;
Is he, who lends the money, less unwise?
Or if the usurer Perillius said,
Take what I ne'er expect shall be repaid,
Are you a fool to take it, or not more
T'affront the god, who sends the shining store?

Perillius.

Ay; but I make him on a banker draw—

Stertinius.

'Tis not enough: add all the forms of law;
The knotty contracts of Cicuta's brain;
This wicked Proteus shall escape the chain:
Drag him to justice, he's a bird, tree, stone,
And laughs as if his cheeks were not his own.

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If bad economists are held unwise,
In good economy some wisdom lies,
And then Perillius is of tainted brain,
Who takes your bond, to sue for it in vain.
Come all, whose breasts with bad ambition rise,
Or the pale passion, that for money dies,
With luxury, or superstition's gloom,
Whate'er disease your health of mind consume,
Compose your robes; in decent ranks draw near,
And, that ye all are mad, with reverence hear.
Misers make whole Anticyra their own:
Its hellebore reserv'd for them alone.
Staberius thus compell'd his heirs t' engrave
On his proud tomb what legacies he gave,
Or stand condemn'd to give the crowd a feast,
By Arrius form'd in elegance of taste,
And gladiators, even an hundred pair,
With all the corn of Afric's fruitful year.
Such is my will, and whether fool or wise,
I scorn your censures, the testator cries,
Wisely perceiving—

Damasippus.

What could he perceive,
Thus on his tomb his fortune to engrave?

Stertinius.

Long as he liv'd he look'd on poverty,
And shunn'd it as a crime of blackest dye;
And had he died one farthing less in pelf,
Had seem'd a worthless villain to himself;
For virtue, glory, beauty, all divine
And human powers, immortal gold! are thine;
And he, who piles the shining heap, shall rise
Noble, brave, just—

Damasippus.

You will not call him wise.

Stertinius.

Yes; any thing; a monarch, if he please:
And thus Staberius, nobly fond of praise,
By latest times might hope to be admir'd,
As if his virtue had his wealth acquir'd.
When Aristippus, on the Libyan waste
Commands his slaves, because it stopp'd their haste,

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To throw away his gold, does he not seem
To be as mad in opposite extreme?

Damasippus.

By such examples, truth can ne'er be tried:
They but perplex the question, not decide.

Stertinius.

If a man fill'd his cabinet with lyres,
Whom neither music charms, nor muse inspires:
Should he buy lasts and knives, who never made
A shoe; or if a wight, who hated trade,
The sails and tackle for a vessel bought,
Madman or fool he might be justly thought.
But, prithee, where's the difference, to behold
A wretch, who heaps and hides his darling gold;
Who knows not how to use the massy store,
Yet dreads to violate the sacred ore?
With a long club, and ever-open eyes,
To guard his corn its wretched master lies,
Nor dares, though hungry, touch the hoarded grain,
While bitter herbs his frugal life sustain:
If in his cellar lie a thousand flasks
(Nay, let them rise to thrice a thousand casks)
Of old Falernian, or the Chian vine,
Yet if he drink mere vinegar for wine;
If, at fourscore, of straw he made his bed,
While moths upon his rotting carpets fed;
By few, forsooth, a madman he is thought,
For half mankind the same disease have caught.
Thou dotard, cursed in the love of pelf,
For fear of starving, will you starve yourself?
Or do you this ill-gotten treasure save
For a luxurious son, or favourite slave?
How little would thy mass of money waste,
Did you on better oil and cabbage feast,
Or on thy clotted hair, and dandruff-head,
A sweeter, more expensive, essence shed!
If nature wish for no immoderate store,
When you forswear, and rob, and steal for more,
Still are you sound? But, when your folly raves,
If you should stone the people, or your slaves;
Those slaves, whom you with pelf, how precious! buy,
Our boys and girls, A madman, madman! cry.

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Is your head safe, although you hang your wife,
Or take by poison your old mother's life?
What! nor in Argos you commit the deed,
Nor did your mother by a dagger bleed;
Nor by a mad Orestes was she slain—
But was Orestes of untainted brain,
Or was he not by furies dire possest,
Before he plung'd his dagger in her breast?
Yet from the time you hold him hurt in mind,
His actions are of harmless, blameless kind.
He neither stabs his sister, nor his friend;
In a few curses his worst passions end;
He calls her fury, or whatever names
Flow from a breast which choler high enflames.
Poor was Opimius, though full rich his chest,
In earthern cups, on some more solemn feast,
Quaff'd the crude juices of a meagre vine,
On week-days dead and vapid was his wine,
When with an heavy lethargy oppprest,
His heir in triumph ran from chest to chest:
Swift to his aid his faithful doctor flies,
And this expedient to awake him tries:
From out his bags he pours the shining store,
And bids a crowd of people count it o'er;
Then plac'd the table ne'er his patient's bed,
And loud, as if he rous'd him from the dead,
"Awake, and guard your wealth; this moment wake:
Your ravening heir will every shilling take."
What! while I live? "Then, wake, that you may live;
Here take the best prescription I can give:
Your bloodless veins, your appetite will fail,
Unless you raise them by a powerful meal.
Take this ptisan—" What will it cost? Nay, hold.
"A very trifle." Sir, I will be told.—
"Three pence."—Alas! what does it signify,
Whether by doctors or by thieves I die?

Damasippus.

Who then is sound?

Stertinius.

Whoever's not a fool.

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Damasippus.

What think you of the miser?

Stertinius.

By my rule,
Both fool and madman.

Damasippus.

Is he sound and well,
If not a miser?

Stertinius.

No.

Damasippus.

I prithee tell,
Good Stoic, why?

Stertinius.

Let us suppose you heard
An able doctor, who perchance declar'd
His patient's stomach good; yet shall he rise,
Or is he well? Ah! no, the doctor cries,
Because a keen variety of pains
Attack the wretch's side, or vex his reins.
You are not perjur'd, nor to gold a slave;
Let heaven your grateful sacrifice receive.
But if your breast with bold ambition glows,
Set sail where hellebore abundant grows.
For, prithee, say, what difference can you find,
Whether to scoundrels of the vilest kind
You throw away your wealth in lewd excess,
Or know not to enjoy what you possess?
When rich Oppidius, as old tales relate,
To his two sons divided his estate,
Two ancient farms, he call'd them to his bed,
And dying, thus, with faltering accent, said:
In your loose robe when I have seen you bear
Your play-things, Aulus, with an heedless air,
Or careless give them to your friends away,
Or with a gamester's desperate spirit play;
While you, Tiberius, anxious counted o'er
Your childish wealth, and hid the little store,
A different madness seem'd to be your fate,
Misers or spendthrifts born to imitate.
Then, by our household gods, my sons, I charge,
That you ne'er lessen, that you ne'er enlarge

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What seems sufficient to your tender sire,
And nature's most unbounded wants require.
Then lest ambition tempt ye, hear this oath,
By whose eternal power I bind ye both:
Curs'd be the wretch, an object of my hate,
Whoe'er accepts an office in the state!
Will you in largesses exhaust your store,
That you may proudly stalk the Circus o'er;
Or in the Capitol embronz'd may stand,
Spoil'd of your fortune and paternal land;
And thus, forsooth, Agrippa's praise engage,
Or show, with reynard's tricks, the lion's rage?
Wherefore does Ajax thus unburied lie?

Agamemnon.

We are a king.

Stertinius.

A base plebeian I,
And ask no more.

Agamemnon.

'Twas just what we decreed:
But, if you think it an unrighteous deed,
Speak what you think. We here our rights resign.

Stertinius.

Greatest of monarchs, may the powers divine
A safe return permit you to enjoy,
With your victorious fleet, from ruin'd Troy—
But may I ask, and answer without fear?

Agamemnon.

You may.

Stertinius.

Then wherefore rots great Ajax here,
For many a Grecian sav'd who well might claim
To brave Achilles the next place in fame?
Is it that Priam, and the sires of Troy,
May view his carcass with malignant joy,
By whom their sons so oft destroy'd in fight
In their own country want the funeral rite?

Agamemnon.

A thousand sheep the frantic kill'd, and cried,
"Here both Atrides; there Ulysses died."

Stertinius.

When your own child you to the altar led,

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And pour'd the salted meal upon her head;
When you beheld the lovely victim slain,
Unnatural father! were you sound of brain?

Agamemnon.

Why not?

Stertinius.

Then what did frantic Ajax do,
When in his rage a thousand sheep he slew?
Nor on his wife or son he drew his sword,
On Atreus' sons alone his curses pour'd;
Nor on his brother turn'd the vengeful steel,
Nor did Ulysses his resentment feel.

Agamemnon.

But I, while adverse winds tempestuous roar,
To loose our fated navy from the shore
Wisely with blood the powers divine atone—

Stertinius.

What! your own blood, you madman?

Agamemnon.

Yes, my own;
But yet not mad.

Stertinius.

'Tis a disorder'd head,
Which, by the passions in confusion led,
The images of right and wrong mistakes,
And rage or folly no great difference makes.
Was Ajax mad, when those poor lambs he slew?
And are your senses right, while you pursue,
With such a crime, an empty title's fame?
Is the heart pure high-swelling for a name?
Should a man take a lambkin in his chair,
With fondling names caress the spotless fair;
Clothes, maids, and gold, as for his child, provide,
And a stout husband for the lovely bride,
His civil rites the judge would take away,
And to trustees in guardianship convey.
Then sure you will not call him sound of brain,
By whom his daughter for a lamb was slain.
Folly and guilt are madness in th' extreme;
The impious and the mad eternally the same.
Blood-stain'd Bellona thunders round his head,
Who is by glassy fame a captive led.

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Now try the sons of luxury, you'll find,
Right reason proves them fools of madding kind.
A youth, upon his father's death, receives
A thousand talents, and his orders gives,
That all the trades of elegance and taste,
All who with wit and humour joy a feast,
The impious crowd, that fills the Tuscan street,
Early next morning at his house should meet.
What then? they frequent his command obey'd,
And thus his speech the wily Pander made:
Whate'er these people have: whate'er is mine;
To-day, to-morrow send, be sure is thine.
Hear the just youth this generous answer make:
"In clumsy boots, dear hunter, for my sake,
You sleep in wild Lucania's snowy waste,
That I at night on a whole boar may feast.
For fish you boldly sweep the wintry seas,
That I, unworthy, may enjoy my ease.
Let each five hundred pounds, with pleasure, take.
To thee, dear Pander, I a present make
Of twice a thousand, that with all her charms
Your wife at night may run into my arms."
An actor's son dissolv'd a wealthy pearl
(The precious ear-ring of his favourite girl)
In vinegar, and thus luxurious quaff'd
A thousand solid talents at a draught.
Had he not equally his wisdom shown,
Into the sink or river were it thrown?
A noble pair of brothers, twins, in truth,
In all th' excesses, trifles, crimes of youth,
On nightingales of monstrous purchase din'd;
What is their process? Are they sound of mind?
Suppose, in childish architecture skill'd,
A bearded sage his castle-cottage build,
Play odd and even, ride his reedy cane,
And yoke his harness'd mice, 'tis madness plain.
But what if reason, powerful reason, prove
'Tis more than equal childishness to love?
If there's no difference, whether in the dust
You sport your infant works, or, high in lust,
An harlot's cruelty with tears deplore,
Will you, like much-chang'd Polemon of yore,

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Throw off the ensigns of the dear disease,
The arts of dress, and earnestness to please?
For the gay youth, though high with liquor warm'd,
Was by the sober sage's doctrine charm'd;
Chastis'd he listen'd to th' instructive lore,
And from his head the breathing garland tore.
A peevish boy shall proffer'd fruit despise:
"Take it, dear puppy." No, and yet he cries,
If you refuse it. Does not this discover
The froward soul of a discarded lover,
Thus reasoning with himself? What! when thus slighted
Shall I return, return though uninvited?
Yes, he shall sure return, and lingering wait
At the proud doors he now presumes to hate.
"Shall I not go if she submissive send,
Or here resolve, my injuries shall end?
Expell'd, recall'd, shall I go back again?
No; let her kneel; for she shall kneel in vain."
When, lo! his wily servant well replied,
Think not by rule and reason, sir, to guide
What ne'er by reason or by measure move,
For peace and war succeed by turns in love;
And while tempestuous these emotions roll,
And float with blind disorder in the soul,
Who strives to fix them by one certain rule,
May by right rule and reason play the fool.
Which from the roof the darted pippins bound,
Does the glad omen prove your senses sound?
Or when with aged tongue you lisp your phrases—
Is he more mad, who that child-cottage raises?
Then add the murders of this fond desire,
And with the sword provoke the madding fire.
When jealous Marius late his mistress slew,
And from a precipice himself he threw,
Was he not mad? or can you by your rule
Condemn the murderer, and acquit the fool?
But though in civil phrase you change the name,
Madman and fool for ever are the same.
With hands clean wash'd, a sober, ancient wight
Ran praying through the streets at early light,
"Snatch me from death; grant me alone to live;

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No mighty boon; with ease the gods can give."
Sound were his senses; yet, if he were sold,
His master sure this weakness must have told,
And, if not fond a law-suit to maintain,
Must have confess'd the slave unsound of brain.
This crowd is by the doctrine of our schools
Enroll'd in the large family of fools.
Her child beneath a quartan fever lies
For full five months; when the fond mother cries,
"Sickness and health are thine, all-powerful Jove,
Then from my son this dire disease remove;
And when your priests thy solemn fast proclaim,
Naked the boy shall stand in Tiber's stream."
Should chance, or the physician's art, up-raise
Her infant from this desperate disease,
The frantic dame shall plunge her hapless boy,
Bring back the fever, and the child destroy.
Tell me, what horrors thus have turn'd her head?
Of the good gods a superstitious dread.

Damasippus.

These arms Stertinius gave me, our eighth sage,
That none unpunish'd may provoke my rage:
Who calls me mad, shall hear himself a fool,
And know he trails his mark of ridicule.

Horace.

Great Stoic, so may better bargains raise
Your ruin'd fortune, tell me, if you please,
Since follies are thus various in their kind,
To what dear madness am I most inclin'd?
For I, methinks, my reason well maintain—

Damasippus.

What! did Agave then suspect her brain,
When, by a Bacchanalian phrensy led,
In her own hand she carried her son's head?

Horace.

Since we must yield to truth, 'tis here confest,
I am a fool; with madness too possest.
But since my mind's distemper'd, if you please,
What seems the proper kind of my disease?

Damasippus.

First that you build, and, scarce of two foot height,
Mimic the mighty stature of the great.

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While you, forsooth, a dwarf in arms, deride
His haughty spirit and gigantic stride,
Yet are you less ridiculous, who dare,
Mere mimic, with Mæcenas to compare?
It chanc'd a mother-frog had stroll'd abroad,
When a fell ox upon her young ones trod;
And only one escap'd, who thus express'd
The doleful news—"Ah me! a monstrous beast
My brothers hath destroy'd." How large? she cries,
And swelling forth—was this the monster's size?
Then larger grows—What! is he larger still?
When more and more she strives her bulk to fill;
"Nay, though you burst, you ne'er shall be so great."
No idle image, Horace, of thy state.
Your verses too; that oil, which feeds the flame;
If ever bard was wise, be thine the name.
That horrid rage of temper—

Horace.

Yet have done!

Damasippus.

That vast expense—

Horace.

Good Stoic, mind your own.

Damasippus.

Those thousand furious passions for the fair—

Horace.

Thou mightier fool, inferior idiots spare.

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SATIRE IV.

HORACE. CATIUS.

Horace.

WHENCE comes my Catius? whither in such haste?

Catius.

I have no time in idle prate to waste.
I must away to treasure in my mind
A set of precepts, novel and refin'd;
Such as Pythagoras could never reach,
Nor Socrates nor scienc'd Plato teach.

Horace.

I ask your pardon, and confess my crime,
To interrupt you at so cross a time.
But yet, if aught escap'd through strange neglect,
You shall with ease the wisdom recollect,
Whether you boast, from nature or from art,
This wondrous gift of holding things by heart.

Catius.

I meant to store them total in my head,
The matter nice, and wrought of subtle thread.

Horace.

But prithee, Catius, what's your sage's name?
Is he a Roman, or of foreign fame?

Catius.

His precepts I shall willingly reveal,
And sing his doctrines, but his name conceal.
Long be your eggs, far sweeter than the round,
Cock-eggs they are, more nourishing and sound.
In thirsty fields a richer colewort grows,
Than where the watery garden overflows.
If by an evening guest perchance surpris'd,
Lest the tough hen (I pray you be advis'd)
Should quarrel with his teeth, let her be drown'd
In lees of wine, and she'll be tender found.
Best flavour'd mushrooms meadow land supplies,
In other kinds a dangerous poison lies.

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He shall with vigour bear the summer's heat,
Who after dinner shall be sure to eat
His mulberries, of blackest, ripest dyes,
And gather'd ere the morning-sun arise.
Aufidius first, most injudicious, quaff'd
Strong wine and honey for his morning draught.
With lenient beverage fill your empty veins,
And smoother mead shall better scour the reins.
Sorrel and white-wine, if you costive prove,
And muscles, all obstructions shall remove.
In the new moon all shell-fish fill with juice,
But not all seas the richer sort produce;
The largest in the Lucrine lake we find,
But the Circæan are of sweeter kind.
Crayfish are best on the Misenian coasts,
And soft Tarentum broadest scollops boasts.
If not exact and elegant of taste,
Let none presume to understand a feast.
'Tis not enough to buy the precious fish,
But know what sauce gives flavour to the dish,
If stew'd or roasted it shall relish best,
And to the table rouse the languid guest.
If the half-tainted flesh of boars you hate,
Let the round dishes bend beneath the weight
Of those with acorns fed; though fat, indeed,
The rest are vapid from the marshy reed.
The vine-fed goat's not always luscious fare;
Wise palates choose the wings of pregnant hare.
None before me so sapient to engage
To tell the various nature, or the age
Of fish and fowl; that secret was my own,
Till my judicious palate quite unknown.
In some new pastry that man's genius lies,
Yet in one art 'tis meanness to be wise.
For should we not be careful, lest our oil,
Though excellent our wine, the fish should spoil?
The sky serene, set out your Massic wine;
In the night air its foulness shall refine,
And lose the scent, unfriendly to the nerves:
Through linen strain'd, no flavour it preserves.
He, who with art would pour a stronger wine
On smooth Falernian lees, should well refine

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Th' incorporated mass with pigeons' eggs;
The falling yolk will carry down the dregs.
Stew'd shrimps and Afric cockles shall excite
A jaded drinker's languid appetite;
But lettuce after wine is cold and crude,
Yet ham or sausage is provoking food;
Perhaps he may prefer, with higher zest,
Whatever in a filthy tavern's drest.
Two sorts of sauce are worthy to be known;
Simple the first, and of sweet oil alone:
The other mix'd with rich and generous wine,
And the true pickle of Byzantian brine;
Let it with shredded herbs and saffron boil,
And when it cools pour in Venafran oil.
Picenian fruits with juicy flavour grow,
But Tibur's with superior beauty glow.
Some grapes have with success in pots been tried:
The Alban better in the smoke are dried;
With them and apples and the lees of wine,
White pepper, common salt, and herring-brine,
I first invented a delicious feast,
And gave a separate plate to every guest.
Monstrous, to spend a fortune on a dish,
Or crowd the table with a load of fish!
It strongly turns the stomach, when a slave
Shall on your cup the greasy tokens leave
Of what rich sauce the luscious caitiff stole;
Or when vile mould incrusts your antique bowl.
Brooms, mats, and saw-dust are so cheaply bought,
That not to have them is a shameless fault.
What! sweep with dirty broom a floor inlaid,
Or on foul couches Tyrian carpets spread?

Horace.

Catius, by friendship, by the powers divine,
Take me to hear this learned sage of thine;
For though his rules you faithfully express,
This mere repeating makes the pleasure less.
Besides, what joy to view his air and mien!
Trifles to you, because full often seen.
Nor mean that ardour, which my breast inflames,
To visit wisdom's even remoter streams,
And by your learned, friendly guidance led,
Quaff the pure precept at the fountain-head.

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SATIRE V.

ULYSSES. TIRESIAS.

Ulysses.

BESIDES the precepts, which you gave before,
Resolve this question, and I ask no more:
Say by what arts and methods I may straight
Repair the ruins of a lost estate.
How now, Tiresias? whence those leering smiles?

Tiresias.

Already vers'd in double-dealing wiles,
Are you not satisfied to reach again
Your native land, and view your dear demesne?

Ulysses.

How poor and naked I return, behold,
Unerring prophet, as you first foretold.
The wooing tribe, in revellings employ'd,
My stores have lavish'd, and my herds destroy'd:
But high descent and meritorious deeds,
Unblest with wealth, are viler than sea-weeds.

Tiresias.

Since, to be brief, you shudder at the thought
Of want, attend, how riches may be caught.
Suppose a thrush, or any dainty thing,
Be sent to you, dispatch it on the wing
To some rich dotard. What your garden yields,
The choicest honours of your cultur'd fields,
To him be sacrific'd, and let him taste,
Before your gods, the vegetable feast.
Though he be perjur'd, though a low-born knave,
Stain'd with fraternal blood, a fugitive slave,
Yet wait upon him at his least command,
And always bid him take the upper hand.

Ulysses.

What! shall Ulysses then obey the call
Of such a wretch, and give a slave the wall?
Not thus at Troy I prov'd my lofty mind,
Contending ever with the nobler kind.

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Tiresias.

Then poverty's your fate.

Ulysses.

And be it so.
Let me with soul undaunted undergo
This loathsome evil, since my valiant heart
In greater perils bore a manly part.
But instant tell me, prophet, how to scrape
Returning wealth, and pile the splendid heap.

Tiresias.

I told, and tell you: you may safely catch
The wills of dotards, if you wisely watch;
And though one hunks or two perceive the cheat,
Avoid the hook, or nibble off the bait,
Lay not aside your golden hope of prey,
Or drop your art, though baffled in your play.
Should either great or less important suit
In court become the matter of dispute,
Espouse the man of prosperous affairs,
Pregnant with wealth, if indigent in heirs;
Though he should hamper with a wicked cause
The juster party, and insult the laws.
Despise the citizen of better life,
If clogg'd with children, or a fruitful wife.
Accost him thus (for he with rapture hears
A title tingling in his tender ears):
Quintus, or Publius, on my faith depend,
Your own deserts have render'd me your friend:
I know the mazy doubles of the laws,
Untie their knots, and plead with vast applause.
Had you a nut, the villain might as well
Pluck out my eyes, as rob you of the shell.
This is the business of my life profest,
That you lose nothing, or become a jest.
Bid him go home, of his sweet self take care;
Conduct his cause, proceed, and persevere,
Should the red dog-star infant statues split,
Or fat-paunch'd Furius in poetic fit
Bombastic howl, and, while the tempest blows,
Bespawl the wintry Alps with hoary snows.
Some person then, who happens to be nigh,
Shall pull your client by the sleeve, and cry,

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"See with what patience he pursues your ends!
Was ever man so active for his friends?"
Thus gudgeons daily shall swim in apace,
And stock your fish-ponds with a fresh increase.
This lesson also well deserves your care:
If any man should have a sickly heir,
And large estate, lest you yourself betray
By making none but bachelors your prey,
With weening ease the pleasing bane instil,
In hopes to stand the second in his will;
Then if the boy, by some disaster hurl'd,
Should take his journey to the nether world,
Your name in full reversion may supply
The void; for seldom fails this lucky die.
If any one desires you to peruse
His will, be sure you modestly refuse,
And push it from you; but obliquely read
The second clause, and quick run o'er the deed,
Observing, whether, to reward your toil,
You claim the whole, or must divide the spoil.
A season'd scrivener, bred in office low,
Full often dupes and mocks the gaping crow.
Thus foil'd Nasica shall become the sport
Of old Coranus, while he pays his court.

Ulysses.

What! are you mad, or purpos'd to propose
Obscure predictions, to deride my woes?

Tiresias.

O son of great Laertes, every thing
Shall come to pass, or never, as I sing;
For Phœbus, monarch of the tuneful Nine,
Informs my soul, and gives me to divine.

Ulysses.

But, good Tiresias, if you please, reveal
What means the sequel of that mystic tale.

Tiresias.

What time a youth, who shall sublimely trace
From fam'd Æneas his heroic race,
The Parthian's dread, triumphant shall maintain
His boundless empire over land and main:
Nasica, loth to reimburse his coin,
His blooming daughter shall discreetly join

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To stout Coranus, who shall slily smoke
The harpy's aim, and turn it to a joke.
The son-in-law shall gravely give the sire
His witness'd will, and presently desire
That he would read it: coyly he complies,
And silent cons it with attentive eyes,
But finds, alas! to him and his forlorn
No legacy bequeath'd—except to mourn.
Add to these precepts, if a crafty lass,
Or freed-man, manage a delirious ass,
Be their ally; their faith applaud, that you,
When absent, may receive as much in lieu;
'Tis good to take these out-works to his pelf,
But best to storm the citadel itself.
Writes he vile verses in a frantic vein?
Augment his madness, and approve the strain:
Prevent his asking, if he loves a wench,
And let your wife his nobler passion quench.

Ulysses.

Can you suppose, a dame so chaste, so pure,
Could e'er be tempted to the guilty lure,
Whom all the suitors amorously strove,
In vain, to stagger in her plighted love?

Tiresias.

The youth too sparing of their presents came;
They lov'd the banquet, rather than the dame;
And thus your prudent, honourable spouse,
It seems, was faithful to her nuptial vows.
But had she once indulg'd the dotard's glee,
Smack'd her old cull, and shar'd the spoil with thee,
She never after could be terrified,
Sagacious beagle, from the reeking hide.
I'll tell a tale, well worthy to be told,
A fact that happen'd, and I then was old:
An hag at Thebes, a wicked one no doubt,
Was thus, according to her will, lugg'd out,
Stiff to the pile. Upon his naked back
Her heir sustain'd the well-anointed pack.
She, likely, took this crotchet in her head,
That she might slip, if possible, when dead,
From him, who, trudging through a filthy road,
Had stuck too closely to the living load.

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Be cautious therefore, and advance with art,
Nor sink beneath, nor over-act your part.
A noisy fellow must of course offend
The surly temper of a sullen friend:
Yet be not mute—like Davus in the play
With head inclin'd, his awful nod obey,
Creep into favour: if a ruder gale
Assault his face, admonish him to veil
His precious pate. Oppose your shoulders, proud
To disengage him from the bustling crowd.
If he loves prating, hang an ear: should lust
Of empty glory be the blockhead's gust,
Indulge his eager appetite, and puff
The growing bladder with inspiring stuff,
Till he, with hands uplifted to the skies,
Enough! enough! in glutted rapture cries.
When he shall free you from your servile fear,
And tedious toil; when broad awake, you hear:
"To good Ulysses, my right trusty slave,
A fourth division of my lands I leave:"
Is then (as void of consolation, roar)
My dearest friend, my Dama now no more?
Where shall I find another man so just,
Firm in his love, and faithful to his trust?
Squeeze out some tears: 'tis fit in such a case
To cloak your joys beneath a mournful face.
Though left to your discretionary care,
Erect a tomb magnificently fair,
And let your neighbours, to proclaim abroad
Your fame, the pompous funeral applaud.
If any vassal of the will-compeers,
With asthma gasping, and advanc'd in years,
Should be dispos'd to purchase house or land,
Tell him that he may readily command
Whatever may to your proportion come,
And for the value, let him name the sum—
But I am summon'd by the queen of hell
Back to the shades. Live artful, and farewell.

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SATIRE VI.

I OFTEN wish'd I had a farm,
A decent dwelling snug and warm,
A garden, and a spring as pure
As crystal running by my door,
Besides a little ancient grove,
Where at my leisure I might rove.
The gracious gods, to crown my bliss,
Have granted this, and more than this;
I have enough in my possessing;
'Tis well: I ask no greater blessing,
O Hermes! than remote from strife
To have and hold them for my life.
If I was never known to raise
My fortune by dishonest ways,
Nor, like the spendthrifts of the times,
Shall ever sink it by my crimes:
If thus I neither pray nor ponder—
Oh! might I have that angle yonder,
Which disproportions now my field,
What satisfaction it would yield!
O that some lucky chance but threw
A pot of silver in my view,
As lately to the man, who bought
The very land in which he wrought!
If I am pleas'd with my condition,
O hear, and grant this last petition:
Indulgent, let my cattle batten,
Let all things, but my fancy, fatten,
And thou continue still to guard,
As thou art wont, thy suppliant bard.
Whenever therefore I retreat
From Rome into my Sabine seat,
By mountains fenc'd on either side,
And in my castle fortified,
What can I write with greater pleasure,
Than satires in familiar measure?

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Nor mad ambition there destroys,
Nor sickly wind my health annoys;
Nor noxious autumn gives me pain,
The ruthless undertaker's gain.
  Whatever title please thine ear,
Father of morning, Janus, hear,
Since mortal men, by heaven's decree,
Commence their toils, imploring thee,
Director of the busy throng,
Be thou the prelude of my song.
  At Rome, you press me: "Without fail
A friend expects you for his bail;
Be nimble to perform your part,
Lest any rival get the start.
Though rapid Boreas sweep the ground,
Or winter in a narrower round
Contract the day, through storm and snow,
At all adventures you must go."
  When bound beyond equivocation,
Or any mental reservation,
By all the ties of legal traps,
And to my ruin, too, perhaps,
I still must bustle through the crowd,
And press the tardy; when aloud
A foul-mouth'd fellow reimburses
This usage with a peal of curses.
"What madness hath possess'd thy pate
To justle folk at such a rate,
When puffing through the streets you scour
To meet Mæcenas at an hour?"
  This pleases me, to tell the truth,
And is as honey to my tooth.
Yet when I reach th' Esquilian Hill
(That deathful scene, and gloomy still),
A thousand busy cares surround me,
Distract my senses, and confound me.
"Roscius entreated you to meet
At court to-morrow before eight—
The secretaries have implor'd
Your presence at their council-board—
Pray, take this patent, and prevail
Upon your friend to fix the seal—"

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Sir, I shall try—replies the man,
More urgent: "If you please you can—"
'Tis more than seven years complete,
It hardly wants a month of eight,
Since great Mæcenas' favour grac'd me,
Since first among his friends he plac'd me,
Sometimes to carry in his chair,
A mile or two, to take the air,
And might entrust with idle chat,
Discoursing upon this or that,
As in a free familiar way,
"How, tell me, Horace, goes the day?
Think you the Thracian can engage
The Syrian Hector of the stage?
This morning air is very bad
For folks who are but thinly clad."
Our conversation chiefly dwells
On these, and such like bagatelles,
As might the veriest prattler hear,
Or be repos'd in leaky ear.
Yet every day, and every hour,
I'm more enslav'd to envy's power.
"Our son of fortune (with a pox)
Sate with Mæcenas in the box,
Just by the stage: you might remark,
They play'd together in the park."
Should any rumour, without head
Or tail, about the streets be spread,
Whoever meets me gravely nods,
And says, "As you approach the gods,
It is no mystery to you,
What do the Dacians mean to do?"
Indeed I know not—"How you joke,
And love to sneer at simple folk!"
Then vengeance seize this head of mine,
If I have heard or can divine—
"Yet, prithee, where are Cæsar's bands
Allotted their debenture-lands?"
Although I swear I know no more
Of that than what they ask'd before,
They stand amaz'd, and think me grown
The closest mortal ever known.

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Thus, in this giddy, busy mass
I lose the sun-shine of my days,
And oft, with fervent wish repeat—
"When shall I see my sweet retreat?
Oh! when with books of sages deep,
Sequester'd ease, and gentle sleep,
In sweet oblivion, blissful balm!
The busy cares of life becalm?
Oh! when shall I enrich my veins,
Spite of Pythagoras, with beans?
Or live luxurious in my cottage,
On bacon ham and savoury pottage?
O joyous nights! delicious feasts!
At which the gods might be my guests."
My friends and I regal'd, my slaves
Enjoy what their rich master leaves.
There every guest may drink and fill,
As much, or little, as he will,
Exempted from the bedlam-rules
Of roaring prodigals and fools:
Whether, in merry mood or whim,
He fills his bumper to the brim,
Or, better pleas'd to let it pass,
Grows mellow with a moderate glass.
Nor this man's house, nor that's estate,
Becomes the subject of debate;
Nor whether Lepos, the buffoon,
Can dance, or not, a rigadoon;
But what concerns us more, I trow,
And were a scandal not to know;
Whether our bliss consist in store
Of riches, or in virtue's lore:
Whether esteem, or private ends,
Should guide us in the choice of friends:
Or what, if rightly understood,
Man's real bliss, and sovereign good.
While thus we spend the social night,
Still mixing profit with delight,
My neighbour Cervius never fails
To club his part in pithy tales:
Suppose, Arellius, one should praise
Your anxious opulence: he says—

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A country mouse, as authors tell,
Of old invited to his cell
A city mouse, and with his best
Would entertain the courtly guest.
Thrifty he was, and full of cares
To make the most of his affairs,
Yet in the midst of his frugality
Would give a loose to hospitality.
In short, he goes, and freely fetches
Whole ears of hoarded oats, and vetches;
Dry grapes and raisins cross his chaps,
And dainty bacon, but in scraps,
If delicacies could invite
My squeamish courtier's appetite,
Who turn'd his nose at every dish,
And saucy piddled, with a—Pish!
The master of the house, reclin'd
On downy chaff, more temperate din'd
On wheat, and darnel from a manger,
And left the dainties for the stranger.
The cit, displeas'd at his repast,
Address'd our simple host at last:
"My friend, what pleasure can you find,
To live this mountain's back behind?
Would you prefer the town and men,
To this wild wood, and dreary den,
No longer, moping, loiter here,
But go with me to better cheer.
"Since animals but draw their breath,
And have no being after death;
Since nor the little, nor the great,
Can shun the rigour of their fate;
At least be merry while you may,
The life of mice is but a day:
Come then, my friend, to pleasure give
The little life you have to live."
Encourag'd thus, the country mouse,
Transported, sallies from his house:
They both set out, in hopes to crawl
At night beneath the city wall;
And now the night, elaps'd eleven,
Possess'd the middle space of heaven,

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When in a rich and splendid dome
They stopp'd, and found themselves at home,
Where ivory couches, overspread
With Tyrian carpets, glowing, fed
The dazzled eye. To lure the taste,
The fragments of a costly feast,
Remaining, drest but yesterday,
In baskets, pil'd on baskets, lay.
  The courtier on a purple seat
Had plac'd his rustic friend in state,
Then bustled, like a busy host,
Supplying dishes boil'd and roast,
Nor yet omits the courtier's duty
Of tasting, ere he brings the booty.
  The country-mouse, with rapture strange,
Rejoices in his fair exchange,
And lolling, like an easy guest,
Enjoys the cheer, and cracks his jest—
When, on a sudden, opening gates,
Loud-jarring, shook them from their seats.
  They ran, affrighted, through the room,
And, apprehensive of their doom,
Now trembled more and more; when, hark!
The mastiff-dogs began to bark;
The dome, to raise the tumult more,
Resounded to the surly roar.
  The bumpkin then concludes, Adieu!
This life, perhaps, agrees with you:
My grove, and cave, secure from snares,
Shall comfort me with chaff and tares.

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SATIRE VII.

DAVUS. HORACE.

Davus.

I'LL hear no more, and with impatience burn,
Slave as I am, to answer in my turn;
And yet I fear—

Horace.

What! Davus, is it you?

Davus.

Yes. Davus, sir, the faithful and the true.
With wit enough no sudden death to fear—

Horace.

Well. Since this jovial season of the year
Permits it, and our ancestors ordain,
No more thy dear impertinence restrain.

Davus.

Among mankind, while some with steady view
One constant course of darling vice pursue,
Most others float along the changing tide,
And now to virtue, now to vice they glide.
Lo! from three rings how Priscus plays the light;
Now shows his naked hand—the various wight
With every hour a different habit wears:
Now in a palace haughtily appears,
Then hides him in some vile and filthy place,
Where a clean slave would blush to show his face:
Now rakes at Rome, and now to Athens flies;
Intensely studies with the learn'd and wise.
Sure all the gods, who rule this varying earth,
In deep despite presided at his birth.
Old Volanerius, once that man of joke,
When the just gout his crippled fingers broke,
Maintain'd a slave to gather up the dice,
So constant was he to his darling vice.
Yet less a wretch than he who now maintains
A steady course, now drives with looser reins.

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Horace.

Tell me, thou tedious varlet, whither tends
This putid stuff?

Davus.

At you direct it bends.

Horace.

At me, you scoundrel?

Davus.

When with lavish praise
You vaunt the happiness of ancient days,
Suppose some god should take you at your word,
Would you not scorn the blessing you implor'd?
Whether not yet convinc'd, as you pretend,
Or weak the cause of virtue to defend;
While sinking in the mire you strive, in vain,
Too deeply plung'd, to free your foot again.
When you're at Rome, the country has your sighs;
A rustic grown, you vaunt into the skies
The absent town. Perchance, if uninvited
To sup abroad, oh! then you're so delighted
With your own homely meal, that one would think
That he, who next engages you to drink,
Must tie you neck and heels; you seem so blest,
When with no bumper-invitation prest.
But should Mæcenas bid his poet wait
(Great folks, like him, can never sup till late),
Sputtering with idle rage the house you rend,
"Where is my essence? Rogues, what, none attend?"
While the buffoons, you promis'd to have treated,
Sneak off with curses—not to be repeated.
Fond of my guts, too fond, perhaps, I seem;
I throw my nose up to a savoury steam:
Or folks may call me careless, idle sot,
Or say I pledge too oft the other pot:
But shall the man of deeper vice, like you,
With malice unprovok'd my faults pursue,
Because with specious phrase, and terms of art,
You clothe, forsooth, the vices of your heart?
What if a greater fool your worship's found,
Than the poor slave you bought for twenty pound?
Think not to fright me with that threatening air;
Nay, keep your temper, sir, your fingers spare,

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While I the maxims, sage and wise, repeat,
Taught me by Crispin's porter at his gate.
You tempt your neighbour's wife; an humble harlot
Contents poor Davus—who 's the greater varlet?
When nature fires my veins, I quench the flame,
And leave the fair-one with uninjur'd fame,
Nor shall one jealous care disturb my breast,
By whom the wanton shall be next possest.
When you throw off those ensigns of your pride,
Your ring, your judge's robe, and basely hide,
Beneath a slave's vile cap, your essenc'd hair,
Say, are you not the wretch whose clothes you wear?
Then where's the difference, whether you engage
Through scourges, wounds and death, to mount the stage,
Or by the conscious chamber-maid are prest
Quite double, neck and heels, into a chest?
The husband's vengeance o'er the wife extends,
But yet his juster wrath on you descends;
For she ne'er strolls abroad in vile disguise,
And, when her lewder wishes highest rise,
She dares but half indulge the sin; afraid,
Even by the man she loves, to be betray'd.
You take the yoke, and to the husband's rage
Your fortune, person, life, and fame engage.
Have you escap'd? Methinks, your future care
Might wisely teach you to avoid the snare.
No; you with ardour to the danger run,
And dare a second time to be undone.
Repeated slave! what beast, that breaks his chain,
In love with bondage would return again?
But you, it seems, ne'er touch the wedded dame—
Then, by the son of Jove, I here disclaim
The name of thief, when, though with backward eye,
I wisely pass the silver goblet by.
But take the danger and the shame away,
And vagrant nature bounds upon her prey,
Spurning the reins. But say, shall you pretend
O'er me to lord it, who can vilely bend
To each proud master; to each changing hour
A very slave? Not even the prætor's power,

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With thrice-repeated rites, thy fears controul,
Or vindicate the freedom of thy soul.
But as the slave, who lords it o'er the rest,
Is still a slave, a master-slave at best,
So art thou, insolent, by me obey'd;
Thou thing of wood and wires, by others play'd.

Horace.

Who then is free?

Davus.

The wise, who well maintains
An empire o'er himself; whom neither chains,
Nor want, nor death, with slavish fear inspire;
Who boldly answers to his warm desire;
Who can ambition's vainest gifts despise;
Firm in himself, who on himself relies;
Polish'd and round who runs his proper course,
And breaks misfortune with superior force.
What is there here, that you can justly claim,
Or call your own? When an imperious dame
Demands her price, with insults vile pursues thee;
Driven out of doors with water well bedews thee,
Then calls you back; for shame, shake off her chain,
And boldly tell her you are free—In vain;
A tyrant-lord thy better will restrains,
And spurs thee hard, and breaks thee to his reins.
If some fam'd piece the painter's art displays,
Transfix'd you stand, with admiration gaze;
But is your worship's folly less than mine,
When I with wonder view some rude design
In crayons or in charcoal, to invite
The crowd, to see the gladiators fight?
Methinks, in very deed they mount the stage,
And seem in real combat to engage:
Now in strong attitude they dreadful bend;
Wounded they wound; they parry and defend:
Yet Davus is with rogue and rascal grac'd,
But you're a critic, and a man of taste.
I am, forsooth, a good-for-nothing knave,
When by a smoking pasty made a slave:
In you it shows a soul erect and great,
If you refuse even one luxurious treat.

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Why may not I, like you, my guts obey?—
"My shoulders for the dear indulgence pay."
But should not you with heavier stripes be taught,
Who search for luxuries; how dearly bought!
For soon this endless, this repeated feast,
Its relish lost, shall pall upon the taste;
Then shall your trembling limbs refuse the weight
Of a vile carcass with disease replete.
How seldom from the lash a slave escapes,
Who trucks some trifle, that he stole, for grapes!
And shall we not the servile glutton rate,
To please his throat who sells a good estate?
You cannot spend one vacant hour alone;
You cannot make that vacant hour your own.
A self-deserter from yourself you stray,
And now with wine, and now with sleep, allay
Your cares: in vain; companions black as night,
Thy pressing cares, arrest thee in thy flight.

Horace.

Is there no stone?

Davus.

At whom, good sir, to throw it?

Horace.

Have I no dart?

Davus.

What mischief ails our poet?
He's mad, or making verses.

Horace.

Hence, you knave,
Or to my farm I'll send you, the ninth slave.

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SATIRE VIII.

HORACE. FUNDANIUS.

Horace.

THEY told me, that you spent the jovial night
With Nasidienus, that same happy wight,
From early day, or you had been my guest;
But, prithee, tell me how you lik'd your feast.

Fundanius.

Sure never better.

Horace.

Tell me, if you please,
How did you first your appetite appease.

Fundanius.

First a Lucanian boar, of tender kind,
Caught, says our host, in a soft, southern wind.
Around him lay whatever could excite,
With pungent force, the jaded appetite;
Rapes, lettuce, radishes, anchovy-brine,
With skerrets, and the lees of Coan wine.
This dish remov'd, a slave expert and able
With purple napkin wip'd a maple table.
Another sweeps the fragments of the feast,
That nothing useless might offend the guest.
At Ceres' feast as Attic virgin walks
Solemn and slow, so black Hydaspes stalks
With right Cæcubian, and the wines of Greece—
Of foreign growth, that never cross'd the seas.
If Alban and Falernian please you more,
So says our host, you may have both good store;
Poor wealth indeed—

Horace.

But tell me, who were there,
Thus happy to enjoy such luscious fare?

Fundanius.

On the first bed Thurinus lay between
Varius and me, if haply right I ween;

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Servilius and Vibidius both were there,
Brought by Mæcenas, and with him they share
The middle bed. Our master of the feast
On the third couch, in seat of honour plac'd,
Porcius betwixt and Nomentanus lies;
Porcius, who archly swallows custard-pies.
  Whate'er of curious relish lay unknown
Is by Nomentane with his finger shown;
For we, poor folk, unknowing of our feast,
Eat fish and wild-fowl—of no common taste.
But he, to prove how luscious was the treat,
With a broil'd flounder's entrails crowds my plate,
Then tells me, apples are more ruddy bright,
If gather'd by fair Luna's waning light.
He best can tell you where the difference lies——
But here Servilius to Vibidius cries,
"Sure to be poison'd, unreveng'd we die,
Unless we drink the wretched miser dry.
Slave, give us larger glasses."—Struck with dread,
A fearful pale our landlord's face o'erspread;
Great were his terrors of such drinking folk,
Whether with too much bitterness they joke,
Or that hot wines, dishonouring his feast,
Deafen the subtle judgment of the taste.
  When our two champions had their facers crown'd,
We did them justice, and the glass went round;
His parasites alone his anger fear'd,
And the full flask unwillingly they spar'd.
  In a large dish an outstretch'd lamprey lies,
With shrimps all floating round: the master cries,
This fish, Mæcenas, big with spawn was caught,
For after spawning-time its flesh is naught.
The sauce is mix'd with olive-oil; the best,
And purest from the vats Venafran prest,
And, as it boil'd, we pour'd in Spanish brine,
Nor less than five-year-old Italian wine.
A little Chian's better when 'tis boil'd,
By any other it is often spoil'd.
Then was white pepper o'er it gently pour'd,
And vinegar of Lesbian vintage sour'd.
  I first among the men of sapience knew
Roquets and herbs in cockle-brine to stew.

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Though in the same rich pickle, 'tis confess'd,
His unwash'd cray-fish sage Curtillus dress'd.
  But lo! the canopy, that o'er us spreads,
Tumbled, in hideous ruin, on our heads,
With dust, how black! not such the clouds arise
When o'er the plain a northern tempest flies.
Some horrors, yet more horrible, we dread,
But raise us, when we found the danger fled.
  Poor Rufus droop'd his head, and sadly cried,
As if his only son untimely died.
Sure he had wept, till weeping ne'er had end,
But wise Nomentane thus up-rais'd his friend:
" Fortune, thou cruelest of powers divine,
To joke poor mortals is a joke of thine."
While Varius with a napkin scarce suppress'd
His laughter, Balatro, who loves a jest,
Cries, Such the lot of life; nor must you claim,
For all your toils, a fair return of fame.
While you are tortur'd thus, and torn with pain,
A guest like me, polite, to entertain
With bread well bak'd, with sauces season'd right,
And all your slaves most elegantly dight,
Down falls the canopy, a trick of fate,
Or a groom-footman stumbling breaks a plate.
Good fortune hides, adversity calls forth,
A landlord's genius, and a general's worth.
  To this mine host: " Thou ever-gentle guest,
May all thy wishes by the gods be blest,
Thou best good man"— But when we saw him rise,
From bed to bed the spreading whisper flies.

Horace.

Sure, never play so fine. But, prithee, say,
How afterwards you laugh'd the time away.

Fundanius.

Slaves, cries Vibidius, have you broke the cask?
How often must I call for t'other flask?
With some pretended joke our laugh was dreat,
Servilius ever seconding the jest,
When you, great host, return with alter'd face,
As if to mend with art your late disgrace.
  The slaves behind in mighty charger bore
A crane in pieces torn, and powder'd o'er

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With salt and flour; and a white gander's liver,
Stuff'd fat with figs, bespoke the curious giver;
Besides the wings of hares, for, so it seems,
No man of luxury the back esteems.
  Then saw we black-birds with o'er-roasted breast,
Laid on the board, and ringdoves rumpless drest!
Delicious fare! did not our host explain
Their various qualities in endless strain,
Their various natures: but we fled the feast,
Resolv'd in vengeance nothing more to taste,
As if Canidia, with empoison'd breath,
Worse than a serpent's, blasted it with death.

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EPISTLES.

BOOK I.

EPISTLE I.

TO MÆCENAS.

O THOU, to whom the Muse first tun'd her lyre,
Whose friendship shall her latest song inspire,
Wherefore, Mæcenas, would you thus engage
Your bard, dismiss'd with honour from the stage,
Again to venture in the lists of fame,
His youth, his genius, now no more the same?
Secure in his retreat Vejanius lies,
Hangs up his arms, nor courts the doubtful prize:
Wisely resolv'd to tempt his fate no more,
Or the light crowd for his discharge implore.
The voice of reason cries with piercing force,
Loose from the rapid car your aged horse,
Lest in the race derided, left behind,
Jaded he drag his limbs, and burst his wind.
Then here farewell th' amusements of my youth;
Farewell to verses; for the search of truth
And moral decency hath fill'd my breast,
Hath every thought and faculty possest;
And I now form my philosophic lore,
For all my future life a treasur'd store.
You ask, perhaps, what sect, what chief I own;
I'm of all sects, but blindly sworn to none;
For as the tempest drives I shape my way,
Now active plunge into the world's wide sea:
Now virtue's precepts rigidly defend,
Nor to the world—the world to me shall bend:

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Then make some looser moralist my guide,
And to a school less rigid smoothly glide.
As night seems tedious to th' expecting youth,
Whose fair-one breaks her assignation-truth;
As to a slave appears the lengthen'd day,
Who owes his task—for he receiv'd his pay;
As, when the guardian-mother's too severe,
Impatient minors waste their last, long year;
So sadly slow the time ungrateful flows,
Which breaks th' important systems I propose;
Systems, whose useful precepts might engage
Both rich and poor; both infancy and age:
But meaner precepts now my life must rule,
These, the first rudiments of wisdom's school.
You cannot hope for Lynceus' piercing eyes:
But will you then a strengthening salve despise?
You wish for matchless Glycon's limbs, in vain,
Yet why not cure the gout's decrepit pain?
Though of exact perfection you despair,
Yet every step to virtue's worth your care.
Even while you fear to use your present store,
Yet glows your bosom with a lust of more?
The power of words and soothing sounds can ease
The raging pain, and lessen the disease.
Is fame your passion? Wisdom's powerful charm,
If thrice read over, shall its force disarm.
The slave to envy, anger, wine, or love,
The wretch of sloth, its excellence shall prove:
Fierceness itself shall hear its rage away,
When listening calmly to th' instructive lay.
Even in our flight from vice some virtue lies;
And free from folly, we to wisdom rise.
A little fortune, and the foul disgrace
To urge in vain your interest for a place;
These are the ills you shun with deepest dread;
With how much labour both of heart and head?
That worst of evils, poverty, to shun,
Dauntless through seas, and rocks, and fires you run
To furthest Ind, yet heedless to attend
To the calm lectures of some wiser friend,
Who bids you scorn what now you most desire,
And with an idiot's ignorance admire.

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What strolling gladiator would engage
For vile applause to mount a country-stage,
Who at the Olympic games could gain renown,
And without danger bear away the crown?
Silver to gold, we own, should yield the prize,
And gold to virtue; louder Folly cries,
Ye sons of Rome, let money first be sought;
Virtue is only worth a second thought.
This maxim echoes through the bankers' street,
While young and old the pleasing strain repeat:
For though you boast a larger fund of sense,
Untainted morals, honour, eloquence,
Yet want a little of the sum that buys
The titled honour, and you ne'er shall rise;
Yet if you want the qualifying right
Of such a fortune to be made a knight,
You're a plebeian still. Yet children sing,
Amid their sports, "Do right, and be a king."
Be this thy brazen bulwark of defence,
Still to preserve thy conscious innocence,
Nor e'er turn pale with guilt. But, prithee, tell,
Shall Otho's law the children's song excel?
The sons of ancient Rome first sung the strain,
That bids the wise, the brave, the virtuous reign.
My friend, get money; get a large estate,
By honest means; but get, at any rate,
That you with knights and senators may sit,
And view the weeping scenes that Pupius writ.
But is he not a friend of nobler kind,
Who wisely fashions and informs thy mind,
To answer, with a soul erect and brave,
To Fortune's pride, and scorn to be her slave?
But should the people ask me, while I choose
The public converse, wherefore I refuse
To join the public judgment, and approve,
Or fly whatever they dislike, or love;
Mine be the answer prudent Reynard made
To the sick lion—Truly I'm afraid,
When I behold the steps, that to thy den
Look forward all, but none return again.
But what a many-headed beast is Rome!
For what opinion shall I choose, or whom?

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Some joy the public revenues to farm;
By presents some our greedy widows charm;
Others their nets for dying dotards lay,
And make the childless bachelor their prey;
By dark extortion some their fortunes raise:
Thus every man some different passion sways;
For where is he, who can with steady view
Even for an hour his favourite scheme pursue?
If a rich lord, in wanton rapture, cries,
What place on earth with charming Baiæ vies!
Soon the broad lake and spreading sea shall prove
Th' impatient whims of his impetuous love;
But if his fancy point some other way
(Which like a sign from heaven he must obey),
Instant, ye builders, to Teanum haste,
An inland country is his lordship's taste.
Knows he the genial bed, and fruitful wife?
"Oh! then the bliss of an unmarried life!"
Is he a bachelor? the only blest,
He swears, are of the bridal joy possest.
Say, while he changes thus, what chains can bind
These various forms; this Proteus of the mind?
But now to lower objects turn your eyes,
And lo! what scenes of ridicule arise!
The poor, in mimicry of heart, presumes
To change his barbers, baths, and beds and rooms,
And, since the rich in their own barges ride,
He hires a boat and pukes in mimic pride.
If some unlucky barber notch my hair,
Or if my robes of different length I wear;
If my new vest a tatter'd shirt confess,
You laugh to see such quarrels in my dress:
But if my judgment, with itself at strife,
Should contradict my general course of life;
Should now despise what it with warmth pursu'd,
And earnest wish for what with scorn it view'd;
Float like the tide; now high the building raise;
Now pull it down; nor round nor square can please;
You call it madness of the usual kind,
Nor laugh, nor think trustees should be assign'd
To manage my estate; nor seem afraid,
That I shall want the kind physician's aid.

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While yet, my great protector and my friend,
On whom my fortune and my hopes depend,
An ill-par'd nail you with resentment see
In one, who loves and honours you like me.
  In short, the wise is only less than Jove,
Rich, free, and handsome; nay a king above
All earthly kings; with health supremely blest—
Except when drivelling phlegm disturbs his rest.

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EPISTLE II.

TO LOLLIUS.

WHILE you, my Lollius, on some chosen theme
With youthful eloquence at Rome declaim,
I read the Grecian poet o'er again,
Whose works the beautiful and base contain;
Of vice and virtue more instructive rules,
Than all the sober sages of the schools.
Why thus I think, if not engag'd, attend,
And, Lollius, hear the reasons of your friend.
The well-wrought fable, that sublimely shows
The loves of Paris, and the lengthen'd woes
Of Greece in arms, presents, as on a stage,
The giddy tumults and the foolish rage
Of kings and people. Hear Antenor's scheme;
"Cut off the cause of war; restore the dame:"
But Paris treats this counsel with disdain,
Nor will be forc'd in happiness to reign:
While hoary Nestor, by experience wise,
To reconcile the angry monarchs tries.
His injur'd love the son of Peleus fires,
And equal passion, equal rage inspires
The breasts of both. When doting monarchs urge
Unsound resolves, their subjects feel the scourge.
Trojans and Greeks, seditious, base, unjust,
Offend alike in violence and lust.
To show what wisdom and what sense can do,
The poet sets Ulysses in our view,
Who conquer'd Troy, and with sagacious ken
Saw various towns and polities of men:
While for himself, and for his native train,
He seeks a passage through the boundless main,
In perils plung'd, the patient hero braves
His adverse fate, and buoys above the waves.
You know the Siren's songs, and Circe's draught,
Which had he, senseless and intemperate, quaff'd,

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With his companions, he, like them, had been
The brutal vassal of an harlot queen;
Had liv'd a dog, debas'd to vile desire,
Or loathsome swine, and grovel'd in the mire.
But we, mere numbers in the book of life,
Like those who boldly woo'd our hero's wife,
Born to consume the fruits of earth; in truth,
As vain and idle as Phæacia's youth;
Mere outside all, to fill the mighty void
Of life, in dress and equipage employ'd,
Who sleep till mid-day, and with melting airs
Of empty music sooth away our cares.
Rogues nightly rise to murder men for pelf,
Will you not rouse you to preserve yourself?
But though in health you doze away your days,
You run, when puff'd with dropsical disease.
Unless you light your early lamp, to find
A moral book; unless you form your mind
To nobler studies, you shall forfeit rest,
And love or envy shall distract your breast.
For the hurt eye an instant cure you find;
Then why neglect, for years, the sickening mind?
Dare to be wise; begin; for, once begun,
Your task is easy; half the work is done:
And sure the man, who has it in his power
To practise virtue, and protracts the hour,
Waits, like the rustic, till the river dried:
Still glides the river, and will ever glide.
For wealth, and wives of fruitfulness we toil;
We stub the forest, and reclaim the soil.
Bless'd with a competence, why wish for more?
Nor house, nor lands, nor heaps of labour'd ore
Can give their feverish lord one moment's rest,
Or drive one sorrow from his anxious breast;
The fond possessor must be bless'd with health,
Who rightly means to use his hoarded wealth.
Houses and riches gratify the breast
For lucre lusting, or with fear depreat,
As pictures, glowing with a vivid light,
With painful pleasure charm a blemish'd sight;
As chafing sooths the gout, or music cheers
The tingling organs of impoethum'd ears.

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Your wine grows acid when the cask is foul:
Learn the strong sense of pleasure to controul;
With virtuous pride its blandishments disdain;
Hurtful is pleasure, when it's bought with pain.
He wants for ever, who would more acquire;
Set certain limits to your wild desire.
The man, who envies, must behold with pain
Another's joys, and sicken at his gain:
Nor could Sicilia's tyrants ever find
A greater torment than an envious mind.
The man, unable to controul his ire,
Shall wish undone what hate and wrath inspire:
To sate his rage precipitate he flies,
Yet in his breast his rage unsated lies.
Anger's a shorter madness of the mind;
Subdue the tyrant, and in fetters bind.
The docile colt is form'd with gentle skill
To move obedient to his rider's will.
In the loud hall the hound is taught to bay
The buck-skin trail'd, then challenges his prey
Through the wild woods. Thus, in your hour of youth,
From pure instruction quaff the words of truth.
The odours of the wine, that first shall stain
The virgin vessel, it shall long retain.
Whether you prove a lagger in the race,
Or with a vigorous ardour urge your pace,
I shall maintain my usual rate; no more;
Nor wait for those behind, nor press on those before.

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EPISTLE III.

TO JULIUS FLORUS.

FLORUS, I long to know where Claudius leads
The distant rage of war; whether he spreads
His conquering banners o'er the Thracian plains,
Or near the Heber, bound in snowy chains.
Or does the Hellespont's high-tower'd sea,
Or Asia's fertile soil, his course delay?
What works of genius do the youth prepare,
Who guard his sacred person? Who shall dare
To sing great Cæsar's wars, immortal theme!
And give his peaceful honours down to fame?
How fares my Titius? Say, when he intends
To publish? Does he not forget his friends?
He, who disdains the springs of common fame,
And dauntless quaffs the deep Pindaric stream.
But will the Muse her favourite bard inspire,
To tune to Theban sounds the Roman lyre?
Or with the transports of theatric rage,
And its sonorous language, shake the stage?
Let Celsus be admonish'd, o'er and o'er,
To search the treasures of his native store,
Nor touch what Phœbus consecrates to Fame;
Lest, when the birds their various plumage claim,
Stripp'd of his stolen pride, the crow forlorn
Should stand the laughter of the public scorn.
What do you dare, who float with active wing
Around the thymy fragrance of the spring?
Not yours the genius of a lowly strain,
Nor of uncultur'd or unpolish'd vein,
Whether you plead with eloquence his cause;
Or to your client clear the doubtful laws;
And sure to gain, for amatorious lays,
The wreaths of ivy, with unenvied praise.
Could you the passions, in their rage, controul,
That damp the nobler purpose of the soul:

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Could you these soothing discontents allay,
Soon should you rise where wisdom points the way;
Wisdom heaven-born, at which we all should aim,
The little vulgar, and the known to fame,
Who mean to live, within our proper sphere,
Dear to ourselves, and to our country dear.
  Now tell me, whether Plancus holds a part
(For sure he well deserves it) in your heart?
Or was the reconciliation made in vain,
And like an ill-cur'd wound breaks forth again,
While inexperienc'd youth, and blood inflam'd,
Drive ye like coursers to the yoke untam'd?
Where'er ye are, too excellent to prove
The broken union of fraternal love,
A votive heifer gratefully I feed,
For your return, in sacrifice to bleed.

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EPISTLE IV.

TO ALBIUS TIBULLUS.

ALBIUS, in whom my satires find
A candid critic, and a kind,
Do you, while at your country-seat,
Some rhiming labours meditate,
That shall in volum'd bulk arise,
And even from Cassius bear the prize;
Or saunter through the silent wood,
Musing on what befits the wise and good?
Thou art not form'd of lifeless mould,
With breast inanimate and cold;
To thee the gods a form complete,
To thee the gods a fair estate
In bounty gave, with art to know
How to enjoy what they bestow.
Can a fond nurse one blessing more
Even for her favourite boy implore,
With sense and clear expression blest,
Of friendship, honour, health possest,
A table elegantly plain,
And a poetic, easy vein?
By hope inspir'd, deprest with fear,
By passion warm'd, perplex'd with care,
Believe that every morning's ray
Hath lighted up thy latest day;
Then, if to-morrow's sun be thine,
With double lustre shall it shine.
Such are the maxims I embrace,
And here, in sleek and joyous case,
You'll find, for laughter fitly bred,
A hog by Epicurus fed.

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EPISTLE V.

TO TORQUATUS.

IF, my Torquatus, you can kindly deign
To lie on beds of simple form and plain,
And sup on herbs alone, but richly drest,
At evening I expect you for my guest.
Nor old, I own, nor excellent my wine,
Of five years vintage, and a marshy vine;
If you have better, bring th' enlivening cheer,
Or, from an humble friend, this summons bear.
In hopes my honour'd guest to entertain,
My fires are lighted, my apartments clean;
Then leave the hope, that, wing'd with folly, flies;
Leave the mean quarrels, that from wealth arise;
Leave the litigious bar, for Cæsar's birth
Proclaims the festal hour of ease and mirth,
While social converse, till the rising light,
Shall stretch, beyond its length, the summer's night.
Say, what are fortune's gifts, if I'm denied
Their cheerful use? for nearly are allied
The madman, and the fool, whose sordid care
Makes himself poor to enrich a worthless heir.
Give me to drink, and, crown'd with flowers, despise
The grave disgrace of being thought unwise.
What cannot wine perform? It brings to light
The secret soul; it bids the coward fight;
Gives being to our hopes, and from our hearts
Drives the dull sorrow, and inspires new arts.
Is there a wretch, whom bumpers have not taught
A flow of words, and loftiness of thought?
Even in th' oppressive grasp of poverty
It can enlarge, and bid the soul be free.
Cheerful my usual task I undertake
(And no mean figure in my office make),
That no foul linen wrinkle up the nose;
That every plate with bright reflexion shows

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My guest his face; that none, when life grows gay,
The sacred hour of confidence betray.
  That all in equal friendship may unite,
Your Butra and Septicius I'll invite,
And, if he's not engag'd to better cheer,
Or a kind girl, Sabinus shall be here.
  Still there is room, and yet the summer's heat
May prove offensive, if the crowd be great:
But write me word, how many you desire,
Then instant from the busy world retire;
And while your tedious clients fill the hall,
Slip out at the back-door, and bilk them all.

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EPISTLE VI.

TO NUMICIUS.

NOT to admire, is of all means the best,
The only means, to make, and keep us blest.
There are, untainted with the thoughts of fear,
Who see the various changes of the year
Unerring roll; who see the glorious sun,
And the fix'd stars, their annual progress run:
But with what different eye do they behold
The gifts of earth; or diamonds or gold;
Old ocean's treasures, and the pearly stores,
Wafted to furthest India's wealthy shores?
Or with what sense, what language, should we gaze
On shows, employments, or the people's praise?
Whoever dreads the opposite extreme
Of disappointment, poverty, or shame,
Is raptur'd with almost the same desires,
As he who dotes on what the world admires;
Equal their terrors, equal their surprise,
When accidental dangers round them rise.
Nor matters it, what passion fills his breast,
With joy or grief, desire or fear oppprest,
Who views, with down-fix'd eyes, life's varying scene,
Whose soul grows stiff, and stupified his brain.
Even virtue, when pursu'd with warmth extreme,
Turns into vice, and fools the sage's fame.
Go now, with taste improv'd, and higher gust
Admire the rich buffet, the marble bust,
The bronze antique, the purple's glowing dye,
The gem, whose radiance trembles on the eye;
Let gazing crowds your eloquence admire,
At early morn to court, at night retire,
Lest Mutus wed a wife of large estate,
While, deeper your dishonour to complete,
The low-born wretch to you no honour pays,
Though you on him with admiration gaze.

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But time shall bring the latent birth to light,
And hide the present glorious race in night;
For though Agrippa's awful colonnade,
Or Appian way, thy passing pomp survey'd,
It yet remains to tread the drear descent,
Where good Pompilius and great Ancus went.
Would you not wish to cure th' acuter pains,
That rack your tortur'd side, or vex your reins?
Would you, and who would not, with pleasure live?
If virtue can alone the blessing give,
With ardent spirit her alone pursue,
And with contempt all other pleasures view.
Yet, if you think that virtue's but a name;
That groves are groves, nor from religion claim
A sacred awe; sail to the distant coast,
Nor let the rich Bithynian trade be lost.
A thousand talents be the rounded sum
You first design'd; then raise a second plum;
A third successive be your earnest care,
And add a fourth to make the mass a square;
For gold, the sovereign queen of all below,
Friends, honour, birth, and beauty can bestow;
The goddess of persuasion forms his train,
And Venus decks the well-bemoney'd swain.
The Cappadocian king, though rich in slaves,
Yet wanting money, was but rich by halves.
Be not like him. Lucullus, as they say,
Once being ask'd to furnish for a play
An hundred martial vests, astonish'd cried,
Whence can so vast a number be supplied?
But yet, whate'er my wardrobe can afford,
You shall command. Soon after writes them word,
Five thousand vests were ready at a call,
They might have part, or, if they pleas'd, take all.
Poor house! where no superfluous wealth's unknown
To its rich lord, that thieves may make their own.
Well then, if wealth alone our bliss insure,
Our first, our latest toil should wealth secure:
If popularity the blessing claims,
Let 's buy a slave to tell our voters' names,
And give the hint, when through the crowded street
To stretch the civil hand to all we meet.

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"The Fabian tribe his interest largely sways;
This the Velinian; there a third, with ease,
Can give or take the honours of the state,
The consul's fasces, and the prætor's seat.
According to their age adopt them all,
And brother, father, most facetious call."
If he lives well, who revels out the night,
Be gluttony our guide; away; 'tis light.
Let's fish, or hunt, and then, at early day
Across the crowded Forum take our way,
Or to the Campus Martius change the scene,
And let our slaves display our hunting train,
That gazing crowds by one poor mule be taught,
At what a price the mighty boar was bought.
Then let us bathe, while th' indigested food
Lies in the swelling stomach raw and crude;
Forgetting all of decency and shame,
From the fair book of freedom strike our name;
And, like th' abandon'd Ulyssean crew,
Our Ithaca forgot, forbidden joys pursue.
If life's insipid without mirth and love,
Let love and mirth insipid life improve.
Farewell! and if a better system 's thine,
Impart it frankly, or make use of mine.

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EPISTLE VII.

TO MÆCENAS.

I PROMIS'D at my country farm to stay
But a few days; yet August roll'd away,
And left your loiterer here. But kind forgive
(In cheerful health if you would have me live),
And to my fears the same indulgence show,
As to my real illness you bestow:
While the first fig now paints the sickly year,
And bids the black funereal pomp appear;
The father, and, with softer passions warm'd,
The tender mother for her son's alarm'd;
The crowded levee with a fever kills,
And the long lawyer's plea unseals our wills;
But when the snows on Alba plains shall lie,
To some warm sea-port town your bard shall fly,
There o'er a book, not too severely, bend,
Resolv'd to visit his illustrious friend,
When western winds and the first swallows bring
The welcome tidings of returning spring.
In other taste to me your bounty flow'd,
Than to his guest the rough Calabrian show'd—
"These pears are excellent, then, prithee, feed."—
I've eaten quite enough.—"Well You indeed
Shall take some home—as many as you please,
For children love such little gifts as these."
I thank you, sir, as if they all were mine.—
"Well, if you leave, you leave them for the swine."
When fools and spendthrifts give what they despise,
Thin crops of gratitude will always rise.
The wise and good with better choice bestow,
And real gold from play-house counters know.
But thus much merit let me boldly claim,
No base ingratitude shall stain my name;
And yet, if I must never leave you more,
Give me my former vigour, and restore

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The hair, that on the youthful forehead plays;
Give me to prate with joy, to laugh with ease,
And o'er the flowing bowl, in sighing strain,
To talk of wanton Cynara's disdain.
Into a wicker cask where corn was kept,
Perchance of meagre corps a field-mouse crept;
But when she fill'd her paunch, and sleek'd her hide,
How to get out again, in vain she tried.
A weasel, who beheld her thus distrest,
In friendly sort the luckless mouse address'd:
"Would you escape, you must be lean and thin;
Then try the cranny where you first got in."
If in this tale th' unlucky picture's mine,
Cheerful the gifts of fortune I resign;
Nor, with a load of luxury opprest,
Applaud the sleep that purer meals digest:
Nor would exchange, for blest Arabia's gold,
My native ease, and freedom uncontroul'd.
You oft have prais'd me, that no bold request,
A modest poet! on your friendship press'd;
My grateful language ever was the same,
I call'd you every tender, awful name;
However, try me, whether I can part
From all your bounty with a cheerful heart.
The youth, whose sire such various woes had tried,
To Menelaus, not unwise, replied,
"Our island hath no rich and fertile plain,
No wide-extended course, in which to train
The generous horse; then grant me to refuse
A present, that you better know to use."
For little folks become their little fate,
And, at my age, not Rome's imperial seat,
But soft Tarentum's more delicious ease,
Or Tibur's solitude, my taste can please.
Philip, whose youth was spent in feats of war,
Now grown a famous lawyer at the bar,
Returning from the courts one sultry day,
Complain'd, how tedious was the lengthen'd way
To folks in years; then wistfully survey'd
A new-trimm'd spark, who, joying in the shade,
Loll'd in a barber's shop, with ease reclin'd,
And par'd his nails, right indolent of mind.

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"Demetrius (so was call'd his favourite slave,
For such commissions a right-trusty knave),
Run and inquire of yonder fellow straight,
His name, friends, country, patron, and estate."
He goes, returns, and—"Menas is his name;
Of moderate fortune, but of honest fame;
A public crier, who a thousand ways
Bustles to get, and then enjoys his ease.
A boon companion 'mongst his equals known,
And the small house he lives in is his own.
His business over, to the public shows,
Or to the field of Mars, he sauntering goes."
Methinks, I long to see this wondrous wight.
Bid him be sure to sup with me to-night.
Menas, with awkward wonder, scarce believes
The courteous invitation he receives:
At last politely begs to be excus'd—
"And am I then with insolence refus'd?"
"Whether from too much fear, or too much pride,
I know not, but he flatly has denied."
Philip next morn our honest pedlar found
Dealing his iron merchandise around
To his small chaps;—the first good-morrow gave;
Menas confus'd—"Behold a very slave,
To business chain'd, or I should surely wait
An early client at your worship's gate;
Or had I first perceiv'd you—as I live"—
Well, sup with me to-night, and I forgive
All past neglect. Be punctual to your hour;
Remember, I expect you just at four.
Till then farewell; your growing fortunes mend,
And know me for your servant and your friend.
Behold him now at supper, where he said,
Or right or wrong, what came into his head.
When Philip saw his eager gudgeon bite,
At morn an early client, and at night
A certain guest, his project to complete,
He takes him with him to his country-seat.
On horseback now he ambles at his ease,
The soil, the climate, his incessant praise.
Philip, who well observ'd our simple guest,
Laughs in his sleeve, resolv'd to have his jest

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At any rate; then lends him fifty pound,
And promis'd fifty more, to buy a spot of ground.
But, that our tale no longer be delay'd,
Bought is the ground, and our spruce merchant made
A very rustic; now, at endless rate,
Vineyards and furrows are his constant prate.
He plants his elms for future vines to rise,
Grows old with care, and on the prospect dies.
But when his goats by sickness, and by thieves
His sheep are lost, his crop his hope deceives,
When his one ox is kill'd beneath the yoke,
Such various losses his best spirits broke.
At midnight dragging out his only horse,
He drives to Philip's house his desperate course;
Who, when he saw him rough, deform'd with hair,
"Your ardent love of pelf, your too much care
Hath surely brought you to this dismal plight."—
Oh! call me wretch, if you would call me right,
But let this wretch your clemency implore,
By your good genius; by each heavenly power;
By that right hand, sure never pledg'd in vain,
Restore to me my former life again.
To his first state let him return with speed,
Who sees how far the joys he left exceed
His present choice: for all should be confin'd
Within the bounds which nature hath assign'd.

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EPISTLE VIII.

TO CELSUS ALBINOVANUS.

TO Celsus, Muse, my warmest wishes bear,
And if he kindly ask you how I fare,
Say, though I threaten many a fair design,
Nor happiness, nor wisdom, yet are mine.
Not that the driving hail my vineyards beat;
Not that my olives are destroy'd with heat;
Not that my cattle pine in distant plains—
More in my mind than body lie my pains.
Reading I hate, and with unwilling ear
The voice of comfort or of health I hear:
Friends or physicians I with pain endure,
Who strive this languor of my soul to cure.
Whate'er may hurt me, I with joy pursue;
Whate'er may do me good, with horror view.
Inconstant as the wind, I various rove;
At Tibur, Rome; at Rome, I Tibur love.
Ask how he does; what happy arts support
His prince's favour, nor offend the court;
If all be well, say first, that we rejoice,
And then, remember, with a gentle voice
Instil this precept on his list'ning ear,
"As you your fortune, we shall Celsus bear."

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EPISTLE IX.

TO CLAUDIUS NERO.

SEPTIMIUS only knows, at least would seem
To know, the rank I hold in your esteem;
Then asks, nay more, compels me to present him
(Nor will a moderate share of praise content him),
Worthy of Nero's family, and heart,
Where only men of merit claim a part.
When fondly he persuades himself I hold
A place among your nearer friends enroll'd,
Much better than myself he sees and knows
How far my interest with Tiberius goes.
A thousand things I urg'd to be excus'd,
Though fearful, if too warmly I refus'd,
I might, perhaps, a mean dissembler seem,
To make a property of your esteem.
Thus have I with a friend's request complied,
And on the confidence of courts relied:
If you forgive me, to your heart receive
The man I love, and know him good and brave.

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EPISTLE X.

TO ARISTIUS FUSCUS.

TO Fuscus, who in city-sports delights,
A country-bard with gentle greeting writes;
In this we differ, but in all beside,
Like twin-born brothers, are our souls allied;
And, as a pair of fondly-constant doves,
What one dislikes the other disapproves.
You keep the nest, I love the rural mead,
The brook, the mossy rock, and woody glade;
In short, I live and reign, whene'er I fly
The joys you vaunt with rapture to the sky,
And like a slave, from the priest's service fled,
I nauseate honey'd cakes, and long for bread.
Would you to nature's laws obedience yield;
Would you a house for health or pleasure build,
Where is there such a situation found,
As where the country spreads its blessings round?
Where is the intemperate winter less severe?
Or, when the sun ascending fires the year,
Where breathes a milder zephyr to assuage
The Dog-star's fury, or the Lion's rage?
Where do less envious cares disturb our rest?
Or are the fields, in nature's colours drest,
Less grateful to the smell, or to the sight,
Than the rich floor, with inlaid marble bright?
Is water purer from the bursting lead,
Than gently murmuring down its native bed?
Among your columns, rich with various dyes,
Unnatural woods with awkward art arise:
You praise the house, whose situation yields
An open prospect to the distant fields;
For Nature, driven out with proud disdain,
All-powerful goddess, will return again;
Return in silent triumph, to deride
The weak attempts of luxury and pride.

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The man, who cannot with judicious eye
Discern the fleece, that drinks the Tyrian dye,
From the pale Latian; yet shall ne'er sustain
A loss so touching, of such heart-felt pain,
As he, who can't, with sense of happier kind,
Distinguish truth from falsehood in the mind.
They who in Fortune's smiles too much delight,
Shall tremble when the goddess takes her flight;
For, if her gifts our fonder passions gain,
The frail possession we resign with pain.
Then fly from grandeur, and the haughty great;
The cottage offers a secure retreat,
Where you may make that heart-felt bliss your own,
To kings, and favourites of kings, unknown.
A lordly stag, arm'd with superior force,
Drove from their common field a vanquish'd horse,
Who for revenge to man his strength enslav'd,
Took up his rider, and the bitt receiv'd:
But, though he conquer'd in the martial strife,
He felt his rider's weight, and champ'd the bitt for life.
So he, who poverty with horror views,
Nor frugal nature's bounty knows to use;
Who sells his freedom in exchange for gold
(Freedom for mines of wealth too cheaply sold),
Shall make eternal servitude his fate,
And feel a haughty master's galling weight.
Our fortunes and our shoes are near allied;
Pinch'd in the strait, we stumble in the wide.
Cheerful and wise, your present lot enjoy,
And on my head your just rebukes employ,
If e'er, forgetful of my former self,
I toil to raise unnecessary pelf.
Gold is the slave, or tyrant, of the soul;
Unworthy to command, it better brooks controul.
These lines behind Vacuna's fane I penn'd,
Sincerely blest, but that I want my friend.

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EPISTLE XI.

TO BULLATIUS.

DO the fam'd islands of th' Ionian seas,
Chios, or Lesbos, my Ballatius please?
Or Sardis, where great Crœsus held his court?
Say, are they less, or greater, than report?
Does Samos, Colophon, or Smyrna, yield
To our own Tibur, or to Mars's field?
Would you, fatigu'd with toils of lands and seas,
In Lebedus, or Asia, spend your days?
You tell me, Lebedus is now become
A desert, like our villages at home,
Yet there you gladly fix your future lot,
Your friends forgetting, by your friends forgot;
Enjoy the calm of life, and, safe on shore,
At distance hear the raging tempest roar.
A traveller, though wet with dirt and rain,
Would not for ever at an inn remain,
Or chill'd with cold, and joying in the heat
Of a warm bath, believe his bliss complete.
Though by strong winds your bark were tempest-tost,
Say, would you sell it on a distant coast?
Believe me, at delicious Rhodes to live
To a sound mind no greater bliss can give,
Than a thick coat in summer's burning ray,
Or a light mantle on a snowy day,
Or to a swimmer Tiber's freezing stream,
Or sunny rooms in August's mid-day flame.
While yet 'tis in your power; while Fortune smiles,
At Rome with rapture vaunt those happy isles,
Then with a grateful hand the bliss receive,
If heaven an hour more fortunate shall give.
Seize on the present joy, and thus possess,
Where'er you live, an inward happiness.

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If reason only can our cares allay,
Not the bold site, that wide commands the sea;
If they, who through the venturous ocean range,
Not their own passions, but the climate change;
Anxious through seas and land to search for rest
Is but laborious idleness at best.
In desert Ulubræ the bliss you'll find,
If you preserve a firm and equal mind.

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EPISTLE XII.

TO ICCIUS.

WHILE Iccius farms Agrippa's large estate,
If he with wisdom can enjoy his fate,
No greater riches Jove himself can give;
Then cease complaining, friend, and learn to live.
He is not poor to whom kind Fortune grants,
Even with a frugal hand, what Nature wants.
Are you with food, and warmth, and raiment blest?
Not royal treasures are of more possest;
And if, for herbs and shell-fish at a feast,
You leave the various luxuries of taste,
Should Fate enrich you with a golden stream,
Your life and manners would be still the same;
Whether convinc'd, that gold can't change the soul,
Or that fair virtue should its power controul.
That all his neighbours' flocks and herds should eat
The sage's harvest, while without its weight
His spirit rov'd abroad, shall ne'er be told
As wonderful; since, not debas'd by gold,
And its infection, Iccius, bravely wise,
Spurns this vile earth, and soars into the skies;
Curious to search, what bounds old ocean's tides;
What through the various year the seasons guides:
Whether the stars by their own proper force,
Or foreign power, pursue their wandering course:
Why shadows darken the pale queen of night;
Whence she renews her orb, and spreads her light;
What nature's jarring sympathy can mean,
And who, among the wise, their systems best maintain.
But whether slaughter'd onions crown your board,
Or murder'd fish an impious feast afford,
Receive Pompeius Grosphus to your heart,
And, ere he asks, your willing aid impart;

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He ne'er shall make a bold, unjust request,
And friends are cheap, when good men are distrest.
  Now condescend to hear the public news:
Agrippa's war the sons of Spain subdues.
The fierce Armenian Nero's virtue feels:
Short by the knees the haughty Parthian kneels:
Again the monarch is by Cæsar crown'd,
And Plenty pours her golden harvest round.

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EPISTLE XIII.

TO VINIUS ASELLA.

VINIUS, I oft desir'd you, ere you went,
Well seal'd my rhiming volumes to present
When Cæsar's high in health, in spirits gay,
Or if he ask to read th' unoffer'd lay,
Lest you offend with too officious zeal,
And my poor works his just resentment feel.
Throw down the burden, if it gall your back,
Nor at the palace fiercely break the pack,
Lest my dear ass become the laughing sport,
The quibbling fable of the wits at court.
Through rivers, steeps, and fens, exert your force,
Nor, when you're victor of the destin'd course,
Under your arm the letter'd bundle bear,
As rusties do their lambs, with awkward air;
Or Pyrrhia, reeling from the drunken bowl,
Conveys away the ball of wool she stole;
Or, in his pride, a tribe-invited guest
Carries his cap and slippers to a feast;
Nor loud proclaim, with how much toil you bear
Such verse, as may detain even Cæsar's ear.
Farewell, make haste; and special caution take,
Lest you should stumble, and my orders break.

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EPISTLE XIV.

TO HIS STEWARD IN THE COUNTRY.

THOU steward of the woods and country-seat,
That give me to myself; whose small estate,
Which you despise, five worthy fathers sent,
One from each house, to Varia's parliament:
Let us inquire, if you with happier toil
Root out the thorns and thistles of the soil,
Than Horace tears his follies from his breast;
Whether my farm or I be cultivated best.
Though Lamia's pious tears, that ceaseless mourn
His brother's death, have hinder'd my return,
Thither my warmest wishes bend their force,
Start from the goal, and beat the distant course.
Rome is your rapture, mine the rural seat;
Pleas'd with each other's lot, our own we hate:
But both are fools, and fools in like extreme;
Guiltless the place, that we unjustly blame,
For in the mind alone our follies lie,
The mind, that never from itself can fly.
A slave at Rome, and discontented there,
A country-life was once your silent prayer:
A rustic grown, your first desires return;
For Rome, her public games and baths, you burn.
More constant to myself, I leave with pain,
By hateful business forc'd, the rural scene.
From different objects our desires arise,
And thence the distance that between us lies;
For what you call inhospitably drear,
To me with beauty and delight appear.
Full well I know a tavern's greasy steam,
And a vile stew, with joy your heart inflame,
While my small farm yields rather herbs than vines,
Nor there a neighbouring tavern pours its wines,
Nor harlot-minstrel sings, when the rude sound
Tempts you with heavy heels to thump the ground.

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But you complain, that with unceasing toil
You break, alas! the long unbroken soil,
Or loose the wearied oxen from the plough,
And feed with leaves new-gather'd from the bough.
Then feels your laziness an added pain,
If e'er the rivulet be swoln with rain;
What mighty mounds against its force you rear,
To teach its rage the sunny mead to spare!
Now hear, from whence our sentiments divide:
In youth, perhaps with not ungraceful pride,
I wore a silken robe, perfum'd my hair,
And without presents charm'd the venal fair:
From early morning quaff'd the flowing glass;
Now a short supper charms, or on the grass
To lay me down at some fair river's side,
And sweetly slumber as the waters glide;
Nor do I blush to own my follies past,
But own, those follies should no longer last.
None there with eye askance my pleasures views,
With hatred dark, or poison'd spite pursues;
My neighbours laugh to see with how much toil
I carry stones, or break the stubborn soil.
You with my city-slaves would gladly join,
And on their daily pittance hardly dine;
While more refin'd they view with envious eye
The gardens, horses, fires, that you enjoy.
Thus the slow ox would gaudy trappings claim;
The sprightly horse would plough amidst the team:
By my advice, let each with cheerful heart,
As best he understands, employ his art.

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EPISTLE XV.

TO VALA.

BY my physician's learn'd advice I fly
From Baia's waters, yet with angry eye
The village views me, when I mean to bathe
The middle winter's freezing wave beneath;
Loudly complaining, that their myrtle groves
Are now neglected; their sulphureous stoves,
Of ancient fame our feeble nerves to raise,
And dissipate the lingering cold disease,
While the sick folks in Clusium's fountains dare
Plunge the bold head, or seek a colder air.
The road we now must alter, and engage
Th' unwilling horse to pass his usual stage:
Ho! whither now? his angry rider cries,
And to the left the restive bridle plies.
We go no more to Baiæ; prithee hear—
But in his bridle lies an horse's ear.
Dear Vala, say, how temperate, how severe,
Are Velia's winters, and Salernum's air:
The genius of the folks, the roads how good:
Which eats the better bread, and when a flood
Of rain descends, which quaffs the gather'd shower,
Or do their fountains purer water pour?
Their country-vintage is not worth my care,
For though at home, whatever wine, I bear,
At sea-port towns I shall expect to find
My wines of generous and of smoother kind,
To drive away my cares, and to the soul,
Through the full veins, with golden hopes to roll;
With flowing language to inspire my tongue,
And make the listening fair-one think me young.
With hares or boars which country's best supplied?
Which seas their better fish luxurious hide?
That I may home return in luscious plight—
'Tis ours to credit, as 'tis yours to write.

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When Mænius had consum'd, with gallant heart,
A large estate, he took the jester's art:
A vagrant zany, of no certain manger,
Who knew not, ere he din'd, or friend or stranger:
Cruel, and scurrilous to all, his jest;
The ruin'd butcher's gulf, a storm, a pest.
Whate'er he got his ravening guts receive,
And when or friend or foe no longer gave,
A lamb's fat paunch was a delicious treat,
As much as three voracious bears could eat;
Then, like reformer Bestius, would he tell ye,
That gluttons should be branded on the belly.
But if, perchance, he found some richer fare,
Instant it vanish'd into smoke and air—
"By Jove I wonder not, that folks should eat,
At one delicious meal, a whole estate,
For a fat thrush is most delightful food,
And a swine's paunch superlatively good."
Thus I, when better entertainments fail,
Bravely commend a plain and frugal meal;
On cheaper suppers show myself full wise,
But if some dainties more luxurious rise—
"Right sage and happy they alone, whose fate
Gives them a splendid house, and large estate."

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EPISTLE XVI.

TO QUINCTIUS.

ASK not, good Quinctius, if my farm maintain
Its wealthy master with abundant grain,
With fruits or pastures; ask not, if the vine
Around its bridegroom-elm luxuriant twine,
For I'll describe, and in loquacious strain,
The site and figure of the pleasing scene.
A chain of mountains with a vale divide,
That opens to the sun on either side:
The right wide spreading to the rising day,
The left is warm'd beneath his setting ray.
How mild the clime, where sloes luxurious grow,
And blushing cornels on the hawthorn glow!
My cattle are with plenteous acorns fed,
Whose various oaks around their master spread;
Well might you swear, that here Tarentum waves
Its dusky shade, and pours forth all its leaves.
A fountain to a rivulet gives its name,
Cooler and purer than a Thracian stream;
Useful to ease an aching head it flows,
Or when with burning pains the stomach glows.
This pleasing, this delicious soft retreat
In safety guards me from September's heat.
Would you be happy, be the thing you seem,
And sure you now possess the world's esteem;
Nor yet to others too much credit give,
But in your own opinion learn to live;
For know, the bliss in our own judgment lies,
And none are happy but the good and wise.
Nor, tho' the crowd pronounce your health is good,
Disguise the fever lurking in your blood,
Till trembling seize you at th' unfinish'd meal—
Idiots alone their ulcer'd ills conceal.
Should some bold flatterer sooth your listening ears,
"The conquer'd world, dread sir, thy name reveres;

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And Jove our guardian god, with power divine,
Who watches o'er Rome's happiness and thine,
Yet holds it doubtful, whether Rome or you,
With greater warmth, each other's good pursue."
This praise, you own, is sacred Cæsar's fame;
But can you answer to your proper name,
When you are call'd th' accomplish'd or the wise,
Names, which we all with equal ardour prize?
Yet he, who gives to-day this heedless praise,
Shall take it back to-morrow, if he please.
As when the people from some worthless knave
Can tear away the consulship they gave;
"Lay down the name of wisdom, sir, 'tis mine;"
Confus'd I leave him, and his gifts resign.
What if he said, I hang'd my aged sire,
Call'd me a thief, a slave to lewd desire,
Shall I be tortur'd with unjust disgrace,
Or change the guilty colours of my face?
False praise can charm, unreal shame controul—
Whom, but a vicious or a sickly soul?
Who then is good?

Quinctius.

Who carefully observes
The senate's wise decrees, nor ever swerves
From the known rules of justice and the laws:
Whose bail secures, whose oath decides a cause.

Horace.

Yet his own house, his neighbours, through his art
Behold an inward baseness in his heart.
Suppose a slave should say, I never steal,
I never ran away—"nor do you feel
The flagrant lash"—No human blood I shed—
"Nor on the cross the ravening crows have fed."—
But, sir, I am an honest slave, and wise—
"My Sabine neighbour there the fact denies.
For wily wolves the fatal pit-fall fear;
Kites fly the bait, and hawks the latent snare;
But virtuous minds a love of virtue charms:
The fear of chastisement thy guilt alarms.
When from my stores you steal one grain of wheat,
My loss indeed is less, your crime as great."
Your honest man, on whom with awful praise
The forum and the courts of justice gaze,

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If e'er he make a public sacrifice,
Dread Janus, Phœbus, clear and loud he cries;
But when his prayer in earnest is preferr'd
Scarce moves his lips, afraid of being heard,
" Beauteous Laverna, my petition hear;
Let me with truth and sanctity appear:
Oh! give me to deceive, and with a veil
Of darkness and of night my crimes conceal."
Behold the miser bending down to earth
For a poor farthing, which the boys in mirth
Fix'd to the ground; and shall the caitiff dare
In honest freedom with a slave compare?
Whoever wishes is with fear possest,
And he, who holds that passion in his breast,
Is in my sense a slave; hath left the post
Where virtue plac'd him, and his arms hath lost:
To purchase hasty wealth his force applies,
And overwhelm'd beneath his burthen lies.
Say, is not this a very worthless knave?
But if you have the most untoward slave,
Yet kill him not, he may some profit yield,
Of strength to guard your flocks, and plough your field,
Or let him winter in the stormy main,
By imports to reduce the price of grain.
The good, and wise, like Bacchus in the play,
Dare, to the king of Thebes, undaunted say,
What can thy power? Thy threatenings I disdain.

Pentheus.

I'll take away thy goods.

Bacchus.

Perhaps, you mean
My cattle, money, moveables, or land.
Well; take them all.

Pentheus.

But, slave, if I command,
A cruel jailor shall thy freedom seize.

Bacchus.

A god shall set me free whene'er I please.

Horace.

Death is that god, the poet here intends,
That utmost bound, where human sorrow ends.

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EPISTLE XVII.

TO SCÆVA.

ALTHOUGH my Scæva knows with art complete,
How to converse familiar with the great,
Yet to th' instruction of an humble friend,
Who would himself be better taught, attend;
Tho' blind your guide, some precepts yet unknown
He may disclose, which you may make your own.
Are you with tranquil, easy pleasure blest,
Or after sun-rise love an hour of rest,
If dusty streets, the rattling chariot's noise,
Or if the neighbouring tavern's midnight joys,
Delight you not, by my advice retreat
To the calm raptures of a rural seat:
For pleasure's not confin'd to wealth alone,
Nor ill he lives, who lives and dies unknown;
But would you serve your friends, and joyous waste
The bounteous hour, perfume you for the feast.
"His patient herbs could Aristippus eat,
He had disdain'd the tables of the great,"
And he, who censures me, the sage replies,
If he could live with kings, would herbs despise.
Tell me, which likes you best, or, younger, hear,
Why Aristippus' maxims best appear;
For with the snarling Cynic well he play'd,
"I am my own buffoon, you take the trade
To please the crowd; yet sure 'tis better pride,
Maintain'd by monarchs, on my horse to ride.
But while at court observant I attend,
For things of vileness you submissive bend;
Own a superior, and yet proudly vaunt,
Imperious Cynic, that you nothing want."
Yet Aristippus every dress became:
In every various change of life the same;
And though he aim'd at things of higher kind,
Yet to the present held an equal mind.

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But that a man, whom patience taught to wear
A thick, coarse coat, should ever learn to bear
A change of life with decency and ease,
May justly, I confess, our wonder raise.
Yet Aristippus, though but meanly drest,
Nor wants, nor wishes for, a purple vest;
He walks, regardless of the public gaze,
And knows in every character to please;
But neither dog's nor snake's envenom'd bite
Can, like a silken robe, the Cynic fright.
"Give him his mantle, or he dies with cold—"
"Nay, give it, let the fool his blessing hold."
In glorious war a triumph to obtain,
Celestial honours, and a seat shall gain
Fast by the throne of Jove; nor mean the praise
These deities of human kind to please.
"But, midst the storms and tempests of a court,
Not every one shall reach the wish'd-for port;
And sure the man, who doubts of his success,
Wisely declines th' attempt"—Then you confess,
That who succeeds, thus difficult his part,
Gives the best proof of courage, as of art.
Then, here, or no where, we the truth shall find;
Conscious how weak in body, or in mind,
When we behold the burthen with despair,
Which others boldly try, with spirit bear,
If virtue's aught beyond an empty name,
Rewards and honours they with justice claim.
In silence who their poverty conceal,
More than th' importunate, with kings prevail:
And whether we with modest action take,
Or snatch the favour, may some difference make.
From this fair fountain our best profits rise:
For, when with plaintive tone a suppliant cries,
My sister lies unportion'd on my hands;
My mother's poor, nor can I sell my lands,
Or they maintain me; might he not have said,
Give me, ah! give me, sir, my daily bread?
While he, who hears him, chants on t' other side,
With me your bounty, ah! with me divide:
But had the crow his food in silence eat,
Less had his quarrels been, and more his meat.

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A jaunt of pleasure should my lord intend,
And with him deign to take an humble friend,
To talk of broken roads, of cold and rain,
Or of his plunder'd baggage to complain,
Is but the trick, which wily harlots try,
Who for a bracelet, or a necklace, cry;
So oft they weep, that we believe no more
When they with tears a real loss deplore.
He, whom a lying lameness once deceives,
No more the falling vagabond believes;
And though with streaming tears the caitiff cries,
Help me, ah! cruel, help a wretch to rise;
Though loud he swear, "Indeed my leg is broke;
By great Osiris I no longer joke;"
Yet the hoarse village answers to his cries,
Go find a stranger to believe your lies.

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EPISTLE XVIII.

TO LOLLIUS.

LOLLIUS, if well I know your heart,
Your liberal spirit scorns an art
That can to sordid flattery bend,
And basely counterfeit the friend;
For such the difference, I ween,
The flatterer and friend between,
As is betwixt a virtuous dame
And prostitute of common fame.
Behold, in opposite excess,
A different vice, though nothing less;
Rustic, inelegant, uncouth,
With shaggy beard and nasty tooth,
That fondly would be thought to be
Fair virtue, and pure liberty:
But virtue in a medium lies,
From whence these different follies rise.
Another, with devotion fervent,
Is more than your obsequious servant;
Admitted as an humble guest,
Where men of money break their jest,
He waits the nod, with awe profound,
And catches, ere it reach the ground,
The falling joke, and echoes back the sound.
A school-boy thus, with humble air,
Repeats to pedagogue severe;
Thus players act an under-part,
And fear to put forth all their art.
Another in dispute engages,
With nonsense arm'd for nothing rages,
"My word of honour not believ'd?
Or my opinion not receiv'd?
And shall I, whether right or wrong,
Be forc'd, forsooth, to hold my tongue?
No—at a price so base and mean,
I would a thousand lives disdain."

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But what's the cause of all this rage?
Who's the best actor on the stage,
Or to which road you best may turn ye,
If to Brundusium lies your journey.
Now, Lollius, mark the wretch's fate,
Who lives dependant on the great.
If the precipitating dice,
If Venus be his darling vice;
If vanity his wealth consumes
In dressing, feasting, and perfumes;
If thirst of gold his bosom sways,
A thirst which nothing can appease;
If poverty with shame he views,
And wealth with every vice pursues;
My lord, more vicious as more great,
Views him with horror, and with hate:
At least, shall o'er him tyrannize,
And like a fond mamma advise,
Who bids her darling daughter shun
The paths of folly she had run.
Think not, he cries, to live like me;
My wealth supports my vanity;
Your folly should be moderate,
Proportion'd to a small estate.
Eutrapelus, in merry mood,
The objects of his wrath pursued,
And where he deepest vengeance meant,
Fine clothes, with cruel bounty, sent;
For, when the happy coxcomb's drest,
Strange hopes and projects fill his breast;
He sleeps till noon, nor will the varlet,
For fame or fortune, leave his harlot.
Lavish he feeds the usurer's store,
And when the miser lends no more,
He learns the gladiator's art,
Or humbly drives a gardener's cart.
Strive not with mean, unhandsome lore
Your patron's bosom to explore,
And let not wine, or anger, wrest
Th' entrusted secret from your breast.
Nor blame the pleasures of your friend,
Nor to your own too earnest bend;

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Nor idly court the froward Muse,
While he the vigorous chase pursues.
Humours like these could fatal prove
To Zethus' and Amphion's love,
Until Amphion kind complied,
And laid th' offensive lyre aside.
So to your patron's will give way,
His gentle insolence obey;
And when he pours into the plain
His horses, hounds, and hunting-train,
Break from the peevish Muse away,
Divide the toils, and share the prey.
The chase was by our sires esteem'd,
Healthful, and honourable deem'd.
Thy swiftness far the hound's exceeds;
The boar beneath thy javelin bleeds;
And who, like thee, with grace can wield
The weapons of the martial field,
Or with such loud applause as thine
Amidst the youthful battle shine?
In the destructive war of Spain
Early you made your first campaign,
Beneath a leader, who regains
Our eagles from the Parthian fanes,
Who boundless now extends his sway,
And bids a willing world obey.
Lollius, though all your actions rise
From judgment temperate and wise,
Yet oft at home you can unbend,
And even to trifling sports descend.
Your little boats, with mimic rage,
Like Actium's mighty fleets engage;
Your lake like Adria's ocean spreads,
The adverse war your brother leads,
Till Victory her wings display,
And crown the conqueror of the day.
Cæsar, who finds that you approve
His taste, shall your diversions love.
If my advice regard may claim,
Be tender of another's fame,
And be the man with caution tried,
In whose discretion you confide.

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Th' impertinent be sure to hate;
Who loves to ask, will love to prate.
Ears, that unfold to every tale,
Entrusted secrets ill conceal,
And you shall wish, but wish in vain,
To call the fleeting words again.
With cautious judgment, o'er and o'er,
The man you recommend explore,
Lest, when the scoundrel's better known,
You blush for errors not your own.
Then frankly give him up to shame,
But boldly guard the injur'd fame
Of a well-known and valued friend,
With vigour and with zeal defend;
For, be assur'd, when he's defam'd,
At you th' envenom'd shaft is aim'd.
When flames your neighbour's dwelling seize,
Your own with instant rage shall blaze;
Then haste to stop the spreading fire,
Which, if neglected, rises higher.
Untried, how sweet a court attendance!
When tried, how dreadful the dependance!
Yet, while your vessel's under sail,
Be sure to catch the flying gale,
Lest adverse winds, with rapid force,
Should bear you from your destin'd course.
The grave a gay companion shun;
Far from the sad the jovial run;
The gay, the witty, and sedate,
Are objects of each other's hate;
And they, who quaff their midnight glass,
Scorn them who dare their bumper pass,
Although they loudly swear, they dread
A sick debauch, and aching head.
Be every look serenely gay,
And drive all cloudy cares away.
The modest oft too dark appear,
The silent, thoughtful and severe.
Consult with care the learned page;
Inquire of every scienc'd sage,
How you may glide with gentle ease
Adown the current of your days,

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Nor vex'd by mean and low desires,
Nor warm'd by wild ambition's fires,
By hope alarm'd, depress'd by fear,
For things but little worth your care:
Whether fair virtue's hallow'd rules
Proceed from Nature, or the schools;
What may the force of care suspend,
And make you to yourself a friend;
Whether the tranquil mind and pure,
Honours, or wealth, our bliss insure,
Or down through life unknown to stray,
Where lonely leads the silent way.
When happy in my rural scene,
Whose fountain chills the shuddering swain,
Such is my prayer—Let me possess
My present wealth, or even less,
And if the bounteous gods design
A longer life, that life be mine.
Give me of books the mental cheer,
Of wealth sufficient for a year,
Nor let me float in Fortune's power,
Dependant on the future hour.
To Jove for life and wealth I pray,
These Jove may give, or take away,
But, for a firm and tranquil mind,
That blessing in myself I find.

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EPISTLE XIX.

TO MÆCENAS.

TO old Cratinus if you credit give,
No water-drinker's verses long shall live,
Or long shall please. Among his motley fold,
Satyrs and Fauns, when Bacchus had enroll'd
The brain-sick rhimer, soon the tuneful Nine
At morning breath'd, and not too sweet, of wine.
When Homer sings the joys of wine, 'tis plain
Great Homer was not of a sober strain;
And father Ennius, till with drinking fir'd,
Was never to the martial song inspir'd.
Let thirsty spirits make the bar their choice,
Nor dare in cheerful song to raise their voice.
Soon as I spoke, our bards, before they write,
Smell of their wine all day, and tipple all the night.
What! if with naked feet and savage air,
Cato's short coat some mimic coxcomb wear,
Say, shall his habit and affected gloom
Great Cato's manners, or his worth, assume?
Cordus, the Moor, while studious how to please
With well-bred raillery, and learned ease,
To rival gay Timagenes he tried,
Yet burst with disappointed spleen and pride:
By such examples many a coxcomb's caught,
Whose art can only imitate a fault.
Should I by chance grow pale, our bardlings think,
That bloodless cumin's the true rhiming drink.
Ye wretched mimics, whose fond heats have been,
How oft! the objects of my mirth and spleen.
Through open worlds of rhime I dar'd to tread
In paths unknown, by no bold footsteps led:
Who on himself relies with conscious pride,
Most certainly the buzzing hive shall guide.
To keen Iambics I first tun'd the lyre,
And warm'd with great Archilochus's fire

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His rapid numbers chose, but shunn'd with care
The style that drove Lycambes to despair.
I fear'd to change the structure of his line,
But shall a short-liv'd wreath be therefore mine?
Sappho, whose verse with manly spirit glows,
Even great Alcæus his Iambics chose,
In different stanzas though he forms his lines,
And to a theme more merciful inclines;
No perjur'd sire with blood-stain'd verse pursues,
Nor ties, in damning rhime, his fair-one's noose.
I first attempted in the Lyric tone
His numbers, to the Roman lyre unknown,
And joy, that works of such unheard-of taste
By men of worth and genius were embrac'd.
But would you know, why some condemn abroad,
Thankless, unjust, what they at home applaud?
I purchase not the venal critic's vote
With costly suppers, or a thread-bare coat;
The works of titled wits I never hear,
Nor vengeful in my turn assault their ear,
The tribe of grammar-pedants I despise,
And hence these tears of spleen and anger rise.
I blush in grand assemblies to repeat
My worthless works, and give such trifles weight;
Yet these professions they with wonder hear—
"No. You reserve them for dread Cæsar's ear;
With your own beauties charm'd, you surely know
Your verses with a honey'd sweetness flow."
Nor dare I rally with such dangerous folk,
Lest I be torn to pieces for a joke,
Yet beg they would appoint another day,
A place more proper to decide the fray;
For jests a fearful strife and anger breed,
Whence quarrels fierce and funeral wars proceed.

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EPISTLE XX.

TO HIS BOOK.

THE shops of Rome impatient to behold,
And, elegantly polish'd, to be sold,
You hate the tender seal, and guardian keys,
Which modest volumes love, and fondly praise
The public world, even sighing to be read,—
Unhappy book! to other manners bred.
Indulge the fond desire, with which you burn,
Pursue your flight, yet think not to return.
But, when insulted by the critic's scorn,
How often shall you cry, Ah! me forlorn!
When he shall throw the tedious volume by,
Nor longer view thee with a lover's eye.
If rage mislead not my prophetic truth,
Rome shall admire, while you can charm with youth;
But soon as vulgar hands thy beauty soil,
The moth shall batten on the silent spoil,
To Afric sent, or packeted to Spain,
Our colonies of wits to entertain.
This shall thy fond adviser laughing see,
As, when his ass was obstinate like thee,
The clown in vengeance push'd him down the hill:
For who would save an ass against his will?
At last thy stammering age in suburb schools
Shall toil in teaching boys their grammar-rules;
But when in evening mild the listening tribe
Around thee throng, thy master thus describe;
A freed-man's son, with moderate fortune blest,
Who boldly spread his wings beyond his nest;
Take from my birth, but to my virtue give
This honest praise, that I with freedom live,
With all that Rome in peace and war calls great;
Of lowly stature; fond of summer's heat,

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And gray before my time. At sense of wrong
Quick in resentment, but it lasts not long.
Let them who ask my age be frankly told,
That I was forty-four Decembers old,
When Lollius chose with Lepidus to share
The power and honours of the consul's chair.

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EPISTLES.

BOOK II.

EPISTLE I.

TO AUGUSTUS.

WHILE you alone sustain th' important weight
Of Rome's affairs, so various and so great;
While you the public weal with arms defend,
Adorn with morals, and with laws amend;
Shall not the tedious letter prove a crime,
That steals one moment of our Cæsar's time?
Rome's founder, Leda's twins, the god of wine,
By human virtues rais'd to power divine,
While they with pious cares improv'd mankind,
To various states their proper bounds assign'd;
Commanded war's destroying rage to cease,
And bless'd their cities with the arts of peace;
Complain'd their virtues, and their toils, could raise
But slight returns of gratitude and praise.
Who crush'd the Hydra, when to life renew'd,
And monsters dire with fated toil subdu'd,
Found that the monster Envy never dies,
Till low in equal death her conqueror lies;
For he, who soars to an unwonted height,
Oppressive dazzles, with excess of light,
The arts beneath him; yet, when dead, shall prove
An object worthy of esteem and love.
Yet Rome to thee her living honours pays:
By thee we swear, to thee our altars raise,
While we confess no prince so great, so wise,
Hath ever risen, or shall ever rise.

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But when your people raise their Cæsar's name
Above the Greek and Roman chiefs in fame,
In this one instance they are just and wise,
Yet other things they view with other eyes;
With cold contempt they treat the living bard;
The dead alone can merit their regard.
To elder bards so lavish of applause,
They love the language of our ancient laws;
On Numa's hymns with holy rapture pore,
And turn our mouldy records o'er and o'er;
Then swear, transported, that the sacred Nine
Pronounc'd on Alba's top each hallow'd line.
But if, because the world with justice pays
To the first bards of Greece its grateful praise,
In the same scale our poets must be weigh'd,
To such disputes what answer can be made?
Since we have gain'd the height of martial fame,
Let us in peaceful arts assert our claim;
The anointed Greeks no longer shall excel,
And neither wrestle, sing, or paint so well.
But let me ask, Since poetry, like wine,
Is taught by time to mellow and refine,
When shall th' immortal bard begin to live?
Say, shall a hundred years completely give
Among your ancients a full right of claim,
Or with the worthless moderns fix his name?
Some certain point should finish the debate.
"Then let him live a hundred years complete."
What if we take a year, a month, a day,
From this judicious sum of fame away,
Shall he among the ancients rise to fame,
Or sink with moderns to contempt and shame?
"Among the ancients let the bard appear,
Though younger by a month, or even a year."
I take the grant, and by degrees prevail
(For hair by hair I pull the horse's tail),
And while I take them year by year away,
Their subtile heaps of arguments decay,
Who judge by annals, nor approve a line
Till death has made the poetry divine.
"Ennius, the brave, the lofty, and the wise,
Another Homer in the critic's eyes,

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Forgets his promise, now secure of fame,
And heeds no more his Pythagoric dream.
No longer Nævius or his plays remain;
Yet we remember every pleasing scene:
So much can time its awful sanction give
In sacred fame to bid a poem live.
"Whate'er disputes of ancient poets rise,
In some one excellence their merit lies:
What depth of learning old Pacuvius shows!
With strong sublime the page of Accius glows;
Menander's comic robe Afranius wears;
Plautus as rapid in his plots appears
As Epicharmus; Terence charms with art,
And grave Cæcilius sinks into the heart.
These are the plays to which our people crowd,
Till the throng'd play-house crack with the dull load.
These are esteem'd the glories of the stage,
From the first drama to the present age."
Sometimes the crowd a proper judgment makes,
But oft they labour under gross mistakes,
As when their ancients lavishly they raise
Above all modern rivalship of praise.
But that sometimes their style uncouth appears,
Or their harsh numbers rudely hurt our ears,
Or that full flatly flows the languid line—
He, who owns this, hath Jove's assent and mine.
Think not I mean, in vengeance, to destroy
The works, for which I smarted when a boy.
But when as perfect models they are prais'd,
Correct and chaste, I own I stand amaz'd.
Then if some better phrase, or happier line,
With sudden lustre unexpected shine,
However harsh the rugged numbers roll,
It stamps a price and merit on the whole.
I feel my honest indignation rise,
When, with affected air, a coxcomb cries,
The work, I own, has elegance and ease,
But sure no modern should presume to please:
Then for his favourite ancients dares to claim
Not pardon only, but rewards and fame.

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When flowers o'erspread the stage, and sweets perfume
The crowded theatre, should I presume
The just success of Atta's plays to blame,
The senate would pronounce me lost to shame.
What! criticise the scenes that charm'd the age
When Æsop and when Roscius trod the stage!
Whether too fond of their peculiar taste,
Or that they think their age may be disgrac'd,
Should they, with awkward modesty, submit
To younger judges in the cause of wit,
Or own, that it were best, provoking truth!
In age t' unlearn the learning of their youth!
He, to whom Numa's hymns appear divine,
Although his ignorance be great as mine,
Not to th' illustrious dead his homage pays,
But envious robs the living of their praise.
Did Greece, like Rome, her moderns disregard,
How had she now possest one ancient bard?
When she beheld her wars in triumph cease,
She soon grew wanton in the arms of peace;
Now she with rapture views th' Olympic games,
And now the sculptor's power her breast inflames;
Sometimes, with ravish'd soul and ardent gaze,
The painter's art intensely she surveys;
Now hears, transported, music's pleasing charms,
And now the tragic Muse her passions warms.
Thus a fond girl, her nurse's darling joy,
Now seeks impatient, and now spurns her toy.
For what can long our pain or pleasure raise?
Such are the effects of happiness and ease.
For many an age our fathers entertain'd
Their early clients, and the laws explain'd;
Instructed them their cautious wealth to lend,
While youth was taught with reverence to attend,
And hear the old point out the prudent ways
To calm their passions, and their fortunes raise.
Now the light people bend to other aims;
A lust of scribbling every breast inflames;
Our youth, our senators, with bays are crown'd,
And rhimes eternal at our feasts go round.

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Even I, who verse and all its works deny,
Can faithless Parthia's lying sons out-lie,
And, ere the rising sun displays his light,
I call for tablets, papers, pens, and—write.
  A pilot only dares a vessel steer;
A doubtful drug unlicens'd doctors fear;
Musicians are to sounds alone confin'd,
And each mechanic hath his trade assign'd:
But every desperate blockhead dares to write;
Verse is the trade of every living wight.
  And yet this wandering phrensy of the brain
Hath many a gentle virtue in its train.
No cares of wealth a poet's heart controul;
Verse is the only passion of his soul.
He laughs at losses, flight of slaves, or fires;
No wicked scheme his honest breast inspires
To hurt his pupil, or his friend betray;
Brown bread and roots his appetite allay;
And though unfit for war's tumultuous trade,
In peace his gentle talents are display'd,
If you allow, that things of trivial weight
May yet support the grandeur of a state.
  He forms the infant's tongue to firmer sound,
Nor suffers vile obscenity to wound
His tender ears; then with the words of truth
Corrects the passions and the pride of youth.
Th' illustrious dead, who fill his sacred page,
Shine forth examples to each rising age;
The languid hour of poverty he cheers,
And the sick wretch his voice of comfort hears.
  Did not the Muse inspire the poet's lays,
How could our youthful choir their voices raise
In prayer harmonious, while the gods attend,
And gracious bid the fruitful shower descend;
Avert their plagues, dispel each hostile fear,
And with glad harvests crown the wealthy year?
Thus can the sound of all-melodious lays
Th' offended powers of heaven and hell appease.
  Our ancient swains, of vigorous, frugal kind,
At harvest-home us'd to unbend the mind
With festal sports; those sports, that bade them bear,
With cheerful hopes, the labours of the year.

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Their wives and children shar'd their hours of mirth,
Who shar'd their toils; when to the goddess Earth
Grateful they sacrific'd a teeming swine,
And pour'd the milky bowl at Sylvan's shrine.
Then to the Genius of their fleeting hours,
Mindful of life's short date, they offer'd wine and flowers.

Here, in alternate verse, with rustic jest
The clowns their awkward raillery express'd,
And as the year brought round the jovial day,
Freely they sported, innocently gay,
Till cruel wit was turn'd to open rage,
And dar'd the noblest families engage.
When some, who by its tooth envenom'd bled,
Complain'd aloud, and others, struck with dread,
Though yet untouch'd, as in a public cause,
Implor'd the just protection of the laws,
Which from injurious libels wisely guard
Our neighbour's fame; and now the prudent bard,
Whom the just terrors of the lash restrain,
To pleasure and instruction turns his vein.

When conquer'd Greece brought in her captive arts,
She triumph'd o'er her savage conquerors' hearts;
Taught our rough verse its numbers to refine,
And our rude style with elegance to shine.
And yet some traces of this rustic vein
For a long age remain'd, and still remain.
For it was late before our bards inquir'd
How the dramatic Muse her Greeks inspir'd;
How Æschylus and Thespis form'd the stage,
And what improv'd the Sophoclean page.
Then to their favourite pieces we applied,
Proud to translate, nor unsuccessful tried;
For, ardent and sublime our native vein,
It breathes the spirit of the tragic scene,
And dares successful; but the Roman Muse
Disdains, or fears, the painful file to use.

Because the comic poet forms his plays
On common life, they seem a work of ease;
But, if he less indulgence must expect,
Sure he should labour to be more correct.

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Even Plautus ill sustains a lover's part,
A frugal sire's, or wily pander's art.
Dossennus slip-shod shambles o'er the scene,
Buffoons, with hungry jests, his constant train;
For gold was all their aim, and then the play
Might stand or fall—indifferent were they.
  He, who on Glory's airy chariot tries
To mount the stage, full often lives and dies.
A cold spectator chills the bard to death,
But one warm look recalls his fleeting breath.
Such light, such trivial things depress or raise
A soul that feels this avarice of praise.
  Farewell the stage; for humbly I disclaim
Such fond pursuits of pleasure, or of fame,
If I must sink in shame, or swell with pride,
As the gay palm is granted, or denied:
And sure the bard, though resolutely bold,
Must quit the stage, or tremble to behold
The little vulgar of the clamorous pit,
Though void of honour, virtue, sense, or wit,
When his most interesting scenes appear,
Call for a prize-fight, or a baited bear;
And should the knights forbid their dear delight,
They rise tumultuous, and prepare for fight.
  But even our knights from wit and genius fly
To pageant shows, that charm the wandering eye.
Drawn are the scenes, and lo! for many an hour
Wide o'er the stage the flying squadrons pour.
Then kings in chains confess the fate of war,
And weeping queens attend the victor's car.
Chairs, coaches, carts, in rattling rout are roll'd,
And ships of mighty bulk their sails unfold.
At last the model of some captive towns,
In ivory built, the splendid triumph crowns.
  Sure, if Democritus were yet on earth,
Whether a beast of mix'd and monstrous birth
Bid them with gaping admiration gaze,
Or a white elephant their wonder raise,
The crowd would more delight the laughing sage,
Than all the farce and follies of the stage;
To think, that asses should in judgment sit,
In solid deafness, on the works of wit.

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For where's the voice so strong as to confound
The shouts with which our theatres resound?
Loud, as when surges lash the Tuscan shore,
Or mountain-forests with a tempest roar,
So loud the people's cries, when they behold
The foreign arts of luxury and gold;
And if an actor is but richly drest,
Their joy is in repeated claps exprest.
But has he spoken? No. Then whence arose
That loud applause? His robe with purple glows.
Though I attempt not the dramatic muse,
Let me not seem, malignant, to refuse
The praises due to those, who with success
Have tried this way to fame; for I confess,
He gives a desperate trial of his art,
Who with imagin'd woes can wring my heart;
To pity sooth me, or to anger warm,
Or with false fears my panting breast alarm;
Then, like a sorcerer, my rapt spirit bear
To Athens, or to Thebes, and fix it there.
But let the bards some little care engage,
Who dare not trust the rough, contemptuous stage,
Yet to the reader's judgment would submit,
If you would offer to the god of wit
Such volumes as his best protection claim;
Or would you warm them in pursuit of fame,
Bid them the hills of Helicon ascend,
Where ever-green the flowery lawns extend.
Yet into sad mishaps we poets fall
(I own the folly's common to us all)
When, to present the labours of our Muse,
Your hours of business or repose we choose;
When even the manly freedom of our friends,
Who blame one verse, our tenderness offends;
When we, unask'd, some favourite lines repeat,
Complaining that our toils, how wondrous great!
Are unobserv'd—that subtilty of thought,
That fine-spun thread, with which our poem's wrought:
Or when we hope, that, soon as Cæsar knows
That we can rhimes abundantly compose,
Our fortune's made; he shall to court invite
Our bashful Muse, compelling us to write.

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Yet is it thine, O Cæsar, to inquire
How far thy virtue can her priests inspire,
In peace or war, to sing her hero's fame,
Nor trust to worthless bards the sacred theme.
Dan Chœrilus was poet-laureat made
By Philip's conquering son, who bounteous paid
The gold, on which his father's image shines,
For misbegotten and unshapen lines;
And yet as ink the spotless hand defiles,
So our fair fame a wretched scribbler soils.
Yet the same monarch, who thus dearly paid
For worthless rhimes, a solemn edict made,
That none but fam'd Apelles dare to trace,
In desperate colours, his imperial face;
And that Lysippus should presume alone
To mould great Ammon's son in brass or stone.
Then take this critic in the arts that lie
Beneath the power and judgment of the eye,
Take him to books, and poetry, you'll swear,
This king was born in thick Bœotian air.
But, never, sir, shall your judicious taste
By Virgil or by Varius be disgrac'd,
For to your bounty they shall grateful raise
A deathless monument of fame and praise;
Nor form'd in brass, with more expression shines
The hero's face, than in the poet's lines
His life and manners; nor would Horace choose
These low and grovelling numbers, could his Muse
The rapid progress of your arms pursue;
Paint distant lands and rivers to the view,
Up the steep mountain with thy war ascend,
Storm the proud fort, and bid the nations bend;
Or bid fell war's destructive horrors cease,
And shut up Janus in eternal peace,
While Parthia bows beneath the Roman name,
And yields her glories to our prince's fame.
But Cæsar's majesty would sure refuse
The feeble praises of my lowly muse,
Nor I, with conscious modesty, should dare
Attempt a subject I want strength to bear;
For sure a foolish fondness of the heart,
At least in rhiming and the Muse's art,

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Hurts whom it loves; for quickly we discern,
With ease remember, and with pleasure learn,
Whate'er may ridicule and laughter move,
Not what deserves our best esteem and love.
All such provoking fondness I disclaim,
Nor wish to stand expos'd to public shame
In wax-work form'd, with horrible grimace,
Nor in splay-footed rhimes to show my face:
Blushing the fulsome present to receive,
And with my author be condemn'd to live;
Perhaps, in the same open basket laid,
Down to the street together be convey'd,
Where pepper, odours, frankincense are sold,
And all small wares in wretched rhimes enroll'd.

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EPISTLE II.

TO JULIUS FLORUS.

FLORUS, the friend of Nero, good and brave,
Suppose a merchant, who would sell a slave,
Should thus address you, "Sir, the boy's complete
From head to foot, and elegantly neat:
He shall be yours for fifty pounds. He plays
The vassal's part, and at a nod obeys
His master's will—then for the Grecian tongue,
He has a taste—so pliable and young,
Like clay, well temper'd with informing skill,
He may be moulded to what shape you will.
His notes are artless, but his voice is fine,
To entertain you o'er a glass of wine.
He sinks in credit, who attempts to raise
His venal wares with over-rating praise,
To put them off his hands. My wants are none,
My stock is little, but that stock my own.
No common dealer, sir, would sell a slave
On equal terms, nor should another have
So good a bargain. Guilty of one slip,
It seems, and fearful of the pendent whip,
I own he loiter'd once. The money pay;
The lad is only apt to run away."
I think he safely may the sum enjoy:
You knew his failing, and would buy the boy:
The form was legal, yet you still dispute
The sale, and plague him with an endless suit.
I told you, frankly told you, ere you went,
That I was grown most strangely indolent,
No longer fit for offices like these,
Lest my not writing might my friends displease.
But what avails whatever I can say,
If you demur against so just a plea?
Besides, you murmur, that my Muse betrays
Your expectations in her promis'd lays.

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A common soldier, who by various toils
And perils gain'd a competence in spoils,
At night fatigu'd while he supinely snor'd,
Lost to a farthing his collected hoard.
This rous'd his rage, in vengeance for his pelf,
Against the foe, nor less against himself.
A very ravenous wolf, with craving maw,
With hungry teeth and wide-devouring jaw,
He charg'd with fury, as the folks report,
Scal'd the high wall, and sack'd a royal fort
Replete with various wealth: for this renown'd,
His name is honour'd, and his courage crown'd;
Besides, in money he receives a meed,
A sum proportion'd to the glorious deed.
His chief soon after purposing to form
Another siege, and take a town by storm,
Began to rouse this desperado's fire
With words that might a coward's heart inspire.
"Go, my brave friend, where fame and honour call
Go; with successful courage mount the wall,
And reap fresh honours with an ample prize:—
What stops your course?" The rustic shrewd replies
"An't please you, captain, let another trudge it;
The man may venture, who has lost his budget."
It chanc'd, at Rome, that I was early taught
What woes to Greece enrag'd Achilles wrought;
Indulgent Athens then improv'd my parts,
With some small tincture of ingenuous arts,
Fair truth from falsehood to discern, and rove
In search of wisdom through the museful grove.
But lo! the time, destructive to my peace,
Me rudely ravish'd from that charming place;
The rapid tide of civil war a-main
Swept into arms, unequal to sustain
The might of Cæsar. Dread Philippi's field
First clipt my wings, and taught my pride to yield
My fortune ruin'd, blasted all my views,
Bold hunger edg'd, and want inspir'd my Muse.
But say, what dose could purify me, blest
With store sufficient, should I break my rest
To scribble verse? The waning years apace
Steal off our thoughts, and rifle every grace.

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las! already have they snatch'd away
ly jokes, my loves, my revellings, and play.
hey strive to wrest my poems from me too,
struct me then what method to pursue.
short, the race of various men admire
s various numbers: thee the softer lyre
elights: this man approves the tragic strain;
hat joys in Bion's keen, satiric vein.
I have three guests invited to a feast,
nd all appear to have a different taste.
hat shall I give them? What shall I refuse?
hat one dislikes, the other two shall choose,
nd even the very dish you like the best,
acid or insipid to the rest.
Besides, at Rome, amidst its toils and cares,
ink you that I can write harmonious airs?
e bids me be his bail; another prays
at I would only listen to his lays,
d leave all business; more to raise your wonder,
though they live the length of Rome asunder,
t both must be obey'd: and here you see
pecial distance—"But the streets are free,
d, while you walk with flowing fancy fraught,
thing occurs to disconcert a thought."
Here furious drives a builder with his team;
engine there up-heaves the lengthen'd beam,
ponderous stone; here justling waggons jar
h mournful herses in tumultuous war:
ce runs a madding dog with baneful ire:
nce a vile pig, polluted with the mire.
then, and bustle through the noisy throng,
ke the Muse, and meditate the song.
he tribe of writers, to a man, admire
peaceful grove, and from the town retire;
nts of Bacchus, indolent they doze
eath the shade, and court its calm repose.
r then in noise unceasing tune the lay,
read where others hardly find their way?
genius, who, in Athens' calm retreat,
studied hard his seven long years complete,
r, waxen old in discipline and books,
oad he comes, with pale and meagre looks;

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Dumb as a statue, slow he stalks along,
And shakes with laughter loud the gazing throng.
What then—at Rome; in this tumultuous town,
Toss'd by the noisy tempest up and down,
Can I, though even the willing Muse inspire,
Adapt her numbers to the sounding lyre?
A wight there was, for rhetoric renown'd,
Whose brother was a lawyer most profound;
In mutual praise all honours were their own,
And this a Gracchus, that a Mucius shone.
What milder phrensy goads the rhiming train?
Mine is the lyre; in elegiac strain
He sooths the soul. A wondrous work is mine!
And his—was surely polish'd by the Nine!
With what an air of true poetic pride
And high disdain, we view from side to side
Apollo's temple, as if we ourselves,
And none but we, should fill the vacant shelves!
Then follow further, if your time permits,
And at a distance hear these mighty wits;
How far entitled to this mutual praise,
Which freely gives, and arrogates the bays.
Like gladiators, who, by candle-light,
Prolong the combat, for with foils they fight,
With mimic rage we rush upon the foe,
Wounded we wound, and measure blow for blow.
Alcæus I in his opinion shine,
He soars a new Callimachus in mine;
Or if Mimnermus be his nobler fame,
He struts and glories in the darling name.
Much I endur'd, when writing I would bribe
The public voice, and sooth the fretful tribe
Of rival poets. Now my rhiming heat
Is cool'd, and reason re-assumes her seat,
I boldly bar mine ears against the breed
Of babbling bards, who without mercy read.
Bad poets ever are a standing jest:
But they rejoice, and, in their folly blest,
Admire themselves; nay, though you silent sit,
They bless themselves in wonder at their wit.
But he who studies masterly to frame
A finish'd piece, and build an honest fame,

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Acts to himself the friendly critic's part,
And proves his genius by the rules of art;
Boldly blots out whatever seems obscure,
Or lightly mean, unworthy to procure
Immortal honour, though the words give way
With warm reluctance, and by force obey;
Though yet enshrin'd within his desk they stand,
And claim a sanction from his parent hand.
As from the treasure of a latent mine,
Long darken'd words he shall with art refine;
Bring into light, to dignify his page,
The nervous language of a former age,
Us'd by the Catoes, and Cethegus old,
Tho' now deform'd with dust, and cover'd o'er with mould.
New words he shall endenizen, which use
Shall authorise, and currently produce;
Then, brightly smooth, and yet sublimely strong,
Like a pure river, through his flowing song
Shall pour the riches of his fancy wide,
And bless his Latium with a vocal tide;
Prune the luxuriant phrase; the rude refine,
Or blot the languid and unsinew'd line.
Yet hard he labours for this seeming ease;
As art, not nature, makes our dancers please.
A stupid scribbler let me rather seem,
While of my faults with dear delight I deem,
Or not perceive, than sing no mortal strain,
And bear this toil, this torture of the brain.
At Argos liv'd a citizen, well known,
Who long imagin'd that he heard the tone
Of deep tragedians on an empty stage,
And sat applauding in ecstatic rage:
In other points, a person who maintain'd
A due decorum, and a life unstain'd,
A worthy neighbour, and a friend sincere,
Kind to his wife, nor to his slaves severe,
Nor prone to madness, though the felon's fork
Defac'd the signet of a bottle-cork;
And wise to shun (well knowing which was which)
The rock high pendent, and the yawning ditch.

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He, when his friends, at much expense and pains,
Had amply purg'd with hellebore his brains,
Come to himself—"Ah! cruel friends!" he cried,
"Is this to save me? Better far have died,
Than thus be robb'd of pleasure so refin'd,
The dear delusion of a raptur'd mind."
'Tis wisdom's part to bid adieu to toys,
And yield amusements to the taste of boys,
Not the soft sound of empty words admire,
Or model measures to the Roman lyre,
But learn such strains and rhapsodies, as roll
Tuneful through life, and harmonise the soul.
Thus, when alone, I commune with my heart,
And silent meditate this nobler art;
If no repletion from the limpid stream
Allay'd the burnings of your thirsty flame,
You straight would tell the doctor your distress,
And is there none to whom you dare confess,
That, in proportion to your growing store,
Your lust of lucre is inflam'd the more?
If you were wounded, and your wound imbib'd
No soothing ease from roots or herbs prescrib'd,
You would avoid such medicines, be sure,
As roots and herbs, that could effect no cure.
But you have heard, that folly flies apace
From him, whom heaven has gifted with the grace
Of happy wealth; and though you have aspir'd
Not more to wisdom, since you first acquir'd
A fund, yet will you listen to no rule
But that from Fortune's insufficient school?
Could riches add but prudence to your years,
Restrain your wishes, and abate your fears,
You then might blush with reason, if you knew
One man on earth more covetous than you.
If that be yours, for which you fairly told
The price concluded (and as lawyers hold,
In some things use a property secures),
The land, which feeds you, must of course be yours.
Your neighbour's bailiff, who manures the fields,
And sows the corn which your provision yields,

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Finds in effect, that he is but your slave:
You give your coin, and in return receive
Fowls, eggs, and wine: and thus it will be found,
That you have bought insensibly the ground,
The fee of which to purchasers before,
Perhaps, had been two thousand pounds, or more;
For what avails it in a life well past,
At first to pay the purchase, or at last?
The frugal man, who purchas'd two estates,
Yet buys the pot-herbs, which his worship eats,
Though he thinks not: this tyrant of the soil
Buys the mere wood, which makes his kettle boil;
And yet he calls that length of land his own,
From which the poplar, fix'd to limits known,
Cuts off disputes, as if he had the power
Of that, which in the moment of an hour
By favour, purchase, force, or fate's commands,
May change its lord, and fall to other hands.
Since thus no mortal properly can have
A lasting tenure; and, as wave o'er wave,
Heir comes o'er heir, what pleasure can afford
Thy peopled manors, and increasing hoard?
Or what avails it, that your fancy roves
To join Lucanian to Calabrian groves,
Inflexible to gold if rigid Fate
Mows down, at once, the little and the great?
Gems, marble, ivory, vases sculptur'd high,
Plate, pictures, robes that drink the Tyrian dye,
These are the general wish; yet sure there are,
Who neither have, nor think them worth their care.
Sauntering, perfumes, and baths, one brother loves
Beyond the wealth of Herod's palmy groves;
Though rich the other, yet with ceaseless toil,
Anxious he burns, ploughs, tames the stubborn soil.
But whence these various inclinations rose,
The God of human nature only knows:
That mystic genius, which our actions guides,
Attends our stars, and o'er our lives presides;
Whose power appears, propitious, or malign,
Stamp'd on each face, and varied through each line.
Be mine, my little fortune to enjoy;
A moderate pittance on myself employ,

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Nor fear the censure of my thankless heir,
That I have left too little to his share;
And yet the wide distinction would I scan
Between an open, hospitable man,
And prodigal; the frugalist secure,
And miser pinch'd with penury; for sure
It differs, whether you profusely spend
Your wealth, or never entertain a friend;
Or, wanting prudence, like a play-day boy
Blindly rush on, to catch the flying joy.
Avert, ye gods, avert the loathsome load
Of want inglorious, and a vile abode.
To me are equal, so they bear their charge,
The little pinnace, and the lofty barge.
Nór am I wafted by the swelling gales
Of winds propitious, with expanded sails,
Nor yet expos'd to tempest-bearing strife,
Adrift to struggle through the waves of life,
Last of the first, first of the last in weight,
Parts, vigour, person, virtue, birth, estate.
You are not covetous: be satisfied.
But are you tainted with no vice beside?
From vain ambition, dread of death's decree,
And fell resentment, is thy bosom free?
Say, can you laugh indignant at the schemes
Of magic terrors, visionary dreams,
Portentous wonders, witching imps of hell,
The nightly goblin, and enchanting spell?
Can you recount with gratitude and mirth
The day revolv'd, that gave thy being birth?
Indulge the failings of thy friends, and grow
More mild and virtuous, as thy seasons flow?
Pluck out one thorn to mitigate thy pain,
What boots it, while so many more remain?
Or act with just propriety your part,
Or yield to those of elegance and art.
Already glutted with a farce of age,
'Tis time for thee to quit the wanton stage,
Lest youth, more decent in their follies, scoff
The nauseous scene, and hiss thee reeling off.

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THE

ART OF POETRY.

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THE

ART OF POETRY.

SUPPOSE a painter to a human head
Should join a horse's neck, and wildly spread
The various plumage of the feather'd kind
O'er limbs of different beasts, absurdly join'd;
Or if he gave to view a beauteous maid
Above the waist with every charm array'd,
Should a foul fish her lower parts enfold,
Would you not laugh such pictures to behold?
Such is the book, that, like a sick man's dreams,
Varies all shapes, and mixes all extremes.
"Painters and poets our indulgence claim,
Their daring equal, and their art the same."
I own th' indulgence—Such I give and take;
But not through nature's sacred rules to break,
Monstrous to mix the cruel and the kind,
Serpents with birds, and lambs with tigers join'd.
Your opening promises some great design,
And shreds of purple with broad lustre shine
Sew'd on your poem. Here in labour'd strain
A sacred grove, or fair Diana's fane,
Rises to view; there through delicious meads
A murmuring stream its winding water leads;
Here pours the rapid Rhine; the watry bow
There bends its colours, and with pride they glow.
Beauties they are, but beauties out of place;
For though your talent be to paint with grace
A mournful cypress, would you pour its shade
O'er the tempestuous deep, if you were paid
To paint a sailor, 'midst the winds and waves,
When on a broken plank his life he saves?
Why will you thus a mighty vase intend,
If in a worthless bowl your labours end?

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Then learn this wandering humour to controul,
And keep one equal tenour through the whole.
  But oft, our greatest errors take their rise
From our best views. I strive to be concise;
I prove obscure. My strength, my fire decays,
When in pursuit of elegance and ease.
Aiming at greatness, some to fustian soar;
Some in cold safety creep along the shore,
Too much afraid of storms; while he, who tries
With ever-varying wonders to surprise,
In the broad forest bids his dolphins play,
And paints his boars disporting in the sea.
Thus, injudicious, while one fault we shun,
Into its opposite extreme we run.
  One happier artist of th' Æmilian square,
Who graves the nails, and forms the flowing hair,
Though he excels in every separate part,
Yet fails of just perfection in his art,
In one grand whole unknowing to unite
Those different parts; and I no more would write
Like him, than with a nose of hideous size
Be gaz'd at for the finest hair and eyes.
  Examine well, ye writers, weigh with care,
What suits your genius; what your strength can bear.
To him, who shall his theme with judgment choose,
Nor words nor method shall their aid refuse.
In this, or I mistake, consists the grace,
And force of method, to assign a place
For what with present judgment we should say,
And for some happier time the rest delay.
  Would you to Fame a promis'd work produce,
Be delicate and cautious in the use
And choice of words: nor shall you fail of praise,
When nicely joining two known words you raise
A third unknown. A new-discover'd theme
For those, unheard in ancient times, may claim
A just and ample licence, which, if us'd
With fair discretion, never is refus'd.
  New words, and lately made, shall credit claim,
If from a Grecian source they gently stream;
For Virgil, sure, and Varius may receive
That kind indulgence which the Romans gave

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To Plautus and Cæcilius: or shall I
Be envied, if my little fund supply
Its frugal wealth of words, since bards, who sung
In ancient days, enrich'd their native tongue
With large increase? An undisputed power
Of coining money from the rugged ore,
Nor less of coining words, is still confest,
If with a legal public stamp imprest.
As when the forest, with the bending year,
First sheds the leaves which earliest appear,
So an old age of words maturely dies,
Others new-born in youth and vigour rise.
We and our noblest works to Fate must yield;
Even Cæsar's mole, which royal pride might build,
Where Neptune far into the land extends,
And from the raging North our fleets defends;
That barren marsh, whose cultivated plain
Now gives the neighbouring towns its various grain;
Tiber, who, taught a better current, yields
To Cæsar's power, nor deluges our fields;
All these must perish, and shall words presume
To hold their honours, and immortal bloom?
Many shall rise, that now forgotten lie;
Others, in present credit, soon shall die,
If custom will, whose arbitrary sway,
Words, and the forms of language, must obey.
By Homer taught the modern poet sings,
In epic strains, of heroes, wars, and kings.
Unequal measures first were tun'd to flow
Sadly expressive of the lover's woe;
But now, to gayer subjects form'd, they move
In sounds of pleasure, to the joys of love:
By whom invented, critics yet contend,
And of their vain disputings find no end.
Archilochus, with fierce resentment warm'd,
Was with his own severe iambics arm'd,
Whose rapid numbers, suited to the stage,
In comic humour, or in tragic rage,
With sweet variety were found to please,
And taught the dialogue to flow with ease;
Their numerous cadence was for action fit,
And form'd to quell the clamours of the Pit.

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The Muse to nobler subjects tunes her lyre;
Gods, and the sons of gods, her song inspire,
Wrestler and steed, who gain'd th' Olympic prize;
Love's pleasing cares, and wine's unbounded joys.
But if, through weakness, or my want of art,
I can't to every different style impart
The proper strokes and colours it may claim,
Why am I honour'd with a Poet's name?
Absurdly modest, why my fault discern,
Yet rather burst in ignorance than learn?
Nor will the genius of the comic Muse
Sublimer tones, or tragic numbers, use;
Nor will the direful Thyestean feast
In comic phrase and language be debas'd.
Then let your style be suited to the scene,
And its peculiar character maintain.
Yet Comedy sometimes her voice may raise,
And angry Chremes rail in swelling phrase:
As oft the tragic language humbly flows,—
For Telephus or Peleus, 'midst the woes
Of poverty or exile, must complain
In prose-like style; must quit the swelling strain,
And words gigantic, if with nature's art
They hope to touch their melting hearer's heart.
'Tis not enough, ye writers, that ye charm
With ease and elegance; a play should warm
With soft concernment; should possess the soul,
And, as it wills, the listening crowd controul.
With them, who laugh, our social joy appears;
With them, who mourn, we sympathise in tears:
If you would have me weep, begin the strain,
Then I shall feel your sorrows, feel your pain;
But if your heroes act not what they say,
I sleep or laugh the lifeless scene away.
The varying face should every passion show,
And words of sorrow wear the look of woe;
Let it in joy assume a vivid air;
Fierce when in rage; in seriousness severe:
For Nature to each change of fortune forms
The secret soul, and all its passions warms;
Transports to rage, dilates the heart with mirth,
Wrings the sad soul, and bends it down to earth.

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The tongue these various movements must express:
But, if ill-suited to the deep distress
His language prove, the sons of Rome engage
To laugh th' unhappy actor off the stage.
  Your style should an important difference make
When heroes, gods, or awful sages speak:
When florid youth, whom gay desires inflame;
A busy servant, or a wealthy dame;
A merchant wandering with incessant toil,
Or he who cultivates the verdant soil:
But if in foreign realms you fix your scene,
Their genius, customs, dialects maintain.
  Or follow fame, or in th' invented tale
Let seeming, well-united truth prevail:
If Homer's great Achilles tread the stage,
Intrepid, fierce, of unforgiving rage,
Like Homer's hero, let him spurn all laws,
And by the sword alone assert his cause.
With untam'd fury let Medea glow,
And Ino's tears in ceaseless anguish flow.
From realm to realm her griefs let Io bear,
And sad Orestes rave in deep despair.
But if you venture on an untried theme,
And form a person yet unknown to fame,
From his first entrance to the closing scene
Let him one equal character maintain.
  'Tis hard a new-form'd fable to express,
And make it seem your own. With more success
You may from Homer take the tale of Troy,
Than on an untried plot your strength employ.
Yet would you make a common theme your own,
Dwell not on incidents already known;
Nor word for word translate with painful care,
Nor be confin'd in such a narrow sphere,
From whence (while you should only imitate)
Shame and the rules forbid you to retreat.
  Begin your work with modest grace and plain,
Nor like the bard of everlasting strain,
"I sing the glorious war, and Priam's fate—"
How will the boaster hold this yawning rate?
The mountains labour'd with prodigious throes,
And lo! a mouse ridiculous arose.

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Far better he, who ne'er attempts in vain:
Opening his poem in this humble strain,
"Muse, sing the man, who, after Troy subdu'd,
Manners and towns of various nations view'd."
He does not lavish at a blaze his fire,
Sudden to glare, and in a smoke expire;
But rises from a cloud of smoke to light,
And pours his specious miracles to sight;
Antiphates his hideous feast devours,
Charybdis barks, and Polyphemus roars.
He would not, like our modern poet, date
His hero's wanderings from his uncle's fate;
Nor sing ill-fated Ilium's various woes,
From Helen's birth, from whom the war arose;
But to the grand event he speeds his course,
And bears his readers with resistless force
Into the midst of things, while every line
Opens, by just degrees, his whole design.
Artful he knows each circumstance to leave,
Which will not grace and ornament receive;
Then truth and fiction with such skill he blends,
That equal he begins, proceeds, and ends.
Mine and the public judgment are the same;
Then hear what I and what your audience claim:
If you would keep us till the curtain fall,
And the last chorus for a plaudit call,
The manner must your strictest care engage,
The levities of youth and strength of age.
The child, who now with firmer footing walks,
And with unfaltering, well-form'd accents talks,
Loves childish sports; with causeless anger burns,
And idly pleas'd with every moment turns.
The youth, whose will no froward tutor bounds,
Joys in the sunny field, his horse and hounds;
Yielding like wax, th'impressive folly bears;
Rough to reproof, and slow to future cares;
Profuse and vain; with every passion warm'd,
And swift to leave what late his fancy charm'd.
With strength improv'd, the manly spirit bends
To different aims, in search of wealth and friends;
Bold and ambitious in pursuit of fame,
And wisely cautious in the doubtful scheme.

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A thousand ills the aged world surround,
Anxious in search of wealth, and, when 'tis found,
Fearful to use what they with fear possess,
While doubt and dread their faculties depress.
Fond of delay, they trust in hope no more,
Listless, and fearful of th' approaching hour;
Morose, complaining, and with tedious praise
Talking the manners of their youthful days;
Severe to censure; earnest to advise,
And with old saws the present age chastise.
The blessings flowing in with life's full tide,
Down with our ebb of life decreasing glide;
Then let not youth, or infancy, engage
To play the parts of manhood, or of age;
For, where the proper characters prevail,
We dwell with pleasure on the well-wrought tale.
The business of the drama must appear
In action or description. What we hear,
With weaker passion will affect the heart,
Than when the faithful eye beholds the part.
But yet let nothing on the stage be brought,
Which better should behind the scenes be wrought;
Nor force th' unwilling audience to behold
What may with grace and eloquence be told.
Let not Medea, with unnatural rage,
Slaughter her mangled infants on the stage;
Nor Atreus his nefarious feast prepare,
Nor Cadmus roll a snake, nor Progne wing the air:
For, while upon such monstrous scenes we gaze,
They shock our faith, our indignation raise.
If you would have your play deserve success,
Give it five acts complete; nor more, nor less;
Nor let a god in person stand display'd,
Unless the labouring plot deserve his aid;
Nor a fourth actor on the crowded scene,
A broken, tedious dialogue maintain.
The chorus must support an actor's part;
Defend the virtuous, and advise with art;
Govern the choleric, the proud appease,
And the short feasts of frugal tables praise;
Applaud the justice of well-govern'd states,
And Peace triumphant with her open gates.

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Entrusted secrets let them ne'er betray,
But to the righteous gods with ardour pray,
That fortune with returning smiles may bless
Afflicted mirth, and impious pride depress;
Yet let their songs with apt coherence join,
Promote the plot, and aid the main design.
  Nor was the flute at first with silver bound,
Nor rival'd emulous the trumpet's sound:
Few were its notes, its form was simply plain,
Yet not unuseful was its feeble strain
To aid the chorus, and their songs to raise,
Filling the little theatre with ease,
To which a thin and pious audience came,
Of frugal manners and unsullied fame.
  But when victorious Rome enlarg'd her state,
And broader walls inclos'd th' imperial seat,
Soon as with wine grown dissolutely gay
Without restraint she cheer'd the festal day,
Then Poesy in looser numbers mov'd,
And Music in licentious tones improv'd:
Such ever is the taste, when clown and wit,
Rustic and critic, fill the crowded pit:
  He, who before with modest art had play'd,
Now call'd in wanton movements to his aid,
Fill'd with luxurious tones the pleasing strain,
And drew along the stage a length of train;
And thus the lyre, once awfully severe,
Increas'd its strings, and sweeter charm'd the ear;
Thus Poetry precipitately flow'd,
And with unwonted elocution glow'd;
Pour'd forth prophetic truths in awful strain,
Dark as the language of the Delphic fane.
  The tragic bard, who, for a worthless prize,
Bid naked satyrs in his chorus rise,
Though rude his mirth, yet labour'd to maintain
The solemn grandeur of the tragic scene;
For novelty alone, he knew, could charm
A lawless crowd, with wine and feasting warm.
  And yet this laughing, prating tribe may raise
Our mirth, nor shall their pleasantry displease;
But let the hero, or the power divine,
Whom late we saw with gold and purple shine,

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Stoop not in vulgar phrase, nor yet despise
The words of earth, and soar into the skies.
For as a matron, on our festal days
Oblig'd to dance, with modest grace obeys,
So should the Muse her dignity maintain
Amidst the satyrs and their wanton train.
If e'er I write, no words too grossly vile
Shall shame my satyrs, and pollute my style.
Nor would I yet the tragic style forsake
So far, as not some difference to make
Between a slave, or wench, too pertly bold,
Who wipes the miser of his darling gold,
And grave Silenus, with instructive nod
Giving wise lectures to his pupil god.
From well-known tales such fictions would I raise
As all might hope to imitate with ease;
Yet while they strive the same success to gain,
Should find their labour and their hopes are vain:
Such grace can order and connexion give;
Such beauties common subjects may receive.
Let not the wood-born satyr fondly sport
With amorous verses, as if bred at court;
Nor yet with wanton jests, in mirthful vein,
Debase the language, and pollute the scene;
For what the crowd with lavish rapture praise,
In better judges cold contempt shall raise.
Rome to her poets too much licence gives,
Nor the rough cadence of their verse perceives;
But shall I then with careless spirit write?
No—let me think my faults shall rise to light,
And then a kind indulgence will excuse
The less important errors of the Muse.
Thus, though perhaps I may not merit fame,
I stand secure from censure and from shame.
Make the Greek authors your supreme delight;
Read them by day, and study them by night.—
"And yet our sires with joy could Plautus hear;
"Gay were his jests, his numbers charm'd their ear."
Let me not say too lavishly they prais'd;
But sure their judgment was full cheaply pleas'd,
If you or I, with taste are haply blest,
To know a clownish from a courtly jest;

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If skilful to discern, when form'd with ease
The modulated sounds are taught to please.
  Thespis, inventor of the tragic art,
Carried his vagrant players in a cart:
High o'er the crowd the mimic tribe appear'd,
And play'd and sung, with lees of wine besmear'd.
Then Æschylus a decent vizard us'd;
Built a low stage; the flowing robe diffus'd.
In language more sublime his actors rage,
And in the graceful buskin tread the stage.
And now the ancient Comedy appear'd,
Nor without pleasure and applause was heard:
But soon, its freedom rising to excess,
The laws were forc'd its boldness to suppress,
And, when no longer licens'd to defame,
It sunk to silence with contempt and shame.
  No path to fame our poets left untried;
Nor small their merit, when with conscious pride
They scorn'd to take from Greece the storied theme,
And dar'd to sing their own domestic fame,
With Roman heroes fill the tragic scene,
Or sport with humour in the comic vein.
Nor had the mistress of the world appear'd
More fam'd for conquest, than for wit rever'd,
Did we not hate the necessary toil
Of slow correction, and the painful file.
  Illustrious youths, with just contempt receive,
Nor let the hardy poem hope to live
Where time and full correction don't refine
The finish'd work, and polish every line.
Because Democritus in rapture cries,
" Poems of genius always bear the prize
From wretched works of art," and thinks that none
But brain-sick bards can taste of Helicon;
So far his doctrine o'er the tribe prevails,
They neither shave their heads, nor pare their nails;
To dark retreats and solitude they run,
The baths avoid, and public converse shun;
The poet's fame and fortune sure to gain,
If long their beards, incurable their brain.
  Ah! luckless I! who purge in spring my spleen—
Else sure the first of bards had Horace been.

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But shall I then, in mad pursuit of fame,
Resign my reason for a poet's name?
No; let me sharpen others, as the hone
Gives edge to razors, though itself has none.
Let me the poet's worth and office show,
And whence his true poetic riches flow;
What forms his genius, and improves his vein;
What well or ill becomes each different scene;
How high the knowledge of his art ascends,
And to what faults his ignorance extends.
Good sense, that fountain of the Muse's art,
Let the strong page of Socrates impart,
And if the mind with clear conceptions glow,
The willing words in just expressions flow.
The poet, who with nice discernment knows
What to his country and his friends he owes;
How various nature warms the human breast,
To love the parent, brother, friend, or guest;
What the great offices of judges are,
Of senators, of generals sent to war;
He surely knows, with nice, well-judging art,
The strokes peculiar to each different part.
Keep nature's great original in view,
And thence the living images pursue;
For when the sentiments and diction please,
And all the characters are wrought with ease,
Your play, though void of beauty, force, and art,
More strongly shall delight, and warm the heart,
Than where a lifeless pomp of verse appears,
And with sonorous trifles charms our ears.
To her lov'd Greeks the Muse indulgent gave,
To her lov'd Greeks, with greatness to conceive,
And in sublimer tone their language raise—
Her Greeks were only covetous of praise.
Our youth, proficients in a nobler art,
Divide a farthing to the hundredth part;
Well done! my boy, the joyful father cries,
Addition and subtraction make us wise.
But when the rust of wealth pollutes the soul,
And money'd cares the genius thus controul,
How shall we dare to hope, that distant times
With honour should preserve our lifeless rhimes?

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Poets would profit or delight mankind,
And with the pleasing have th' instructive join'd.
Short be the precept, which with ease is gain'd
By docile minds, and faithfully retain'd.
If in dull length your moral is exprest,
The tedious wisdom overflows the breast.
Would you divert? the probable maintain,
Nor force us to believe the monstrous scene,
That shows a child, by a fell witch devour'd,
Dragg'd from her entrails, and to life restor'd.
Grave age approves the solid and the wise;
Gay youth from too austere a drama flies:
Profit and pleasure, then, to mix with art,
To inform the judgment, nor offend the heart,
Shall gain all votes; to booksellers shall raise
No trivial fortune, and across the seas
To distant nations spread the writer's fame,
And with immortal honours crown his name.
Yet there are faults that we may well excuse,
For oft the strings th' intended sound refuse;
In vain his tuneful hand the master tries,
He asks a flat, and hears a sharp arise;
Nor always will the bow, though fam'd for art,
With speed unerring wing the threatening dart.
But where the beauties more in number shine,
I am not angry when a casual line
(That with some trivial faults unequal flows)
A careless hand, or human frailty, shows.
But as we ne'er those scribes with mercy treat,
Who, though advis'd, the same mistakes repeat;
Or, as we laugh at him who constant brings
The same rude discord from the jarring strings;
So, if strange chance a Chœrilus inspire
With some good lines, I laugh while I admire;
Yet hold it for a fault I can't excuse,
If honest Homer slumber o'er his Muse;
Although, perhaps, a kind indulgent sleep
O'er works of length allowably may creep.
Poems like pictures are: some charm when nigh,
Others at distance more delight your eye;
That loves the shade, this tempts a stronger light,
And challenges the critic's piercing sight:

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That gives us pleasure for a single view;
And this, ten times repeated, still is new.
Although your father's precepts form your youth,
And add experience to your taste of truth,
Of this one maxim, Piso, be assur'd,
In certain things a medium is endur'd.
Who tries Messala's eloquence in vain,
Nor can a knotty point of law explain
Like learn'd Cascellius, yet may justly claim,
For pleading or advice, some right to fame;
But God, and man, and letter'd post denies
That poets ever are of middling size.
As jarring music at a jovial feast,
Or muddy essence, or th' ungrateful taste
Of bitter honey, shall the guests displease,
Because they want not luxuries like these;
So poems, form'd alone to yield delight,
Give deep disgust, or pleasure, to the height.
The man, who knows not how with art to wield
The sportive weapons of the martial field,
The bounding ball, round quoit, or whirling troque,
Will not the laughter of the crowd provoke:
But every desperate blockhead dares to write—
Why not? His fortune's large to make a knight;
The man's free-born; perhaps, of gentle strain;
His character and manners pure from stain.
But thou, dear Piso, never tempt the Muse,
If wisdom's goddess shall her aid refuse;
And when you write, let candid Metius hear,
Or try your labours on your father's ear,
Or even on mine; but let them not come forth
Till the ninth ripening year mature their worth.
You may correct what in your closet lies:
If publish'd, it irrevocably flies.
The wood-born race of men when Orpheus tam'd,
From acorns and from mutual blood reclaim'd,
This priest divine was fabled to assuage
The tiger's fierceness, and the lion's rage.
Thus rose the Theban wall; Amphion's lyre
And soothing voice the listening stones inspire.
Poetic wisdom mark'd, with happy mean,
Public and private; sacred and profane;

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The wandering joys of lawless love suppress'd;
With equal rites the wedded couple bless'd:
Plann'd future towns, and instituted laws:
So verse became divine, and poets gain'd applause.
Homer, Tyrtæus, by the Muse inspir'd,
To deeds of arms the martial spirit fir'd.
In verse the oracles divine were heard,
And nature's secret laws in verse declar'd;
Monarchs were courted in Pierian strain,
And comic sports reliev'd the wearied swain;
Apollo sings, the Muses tune the lyre;
Then blush not for an art which they inspire.
'Tis long disputed, whether poets claim
From art or nature their best right to fame;
But art, if not enrich'd by nature's vein,
And a rude genius of uncultur'd strain,
Are useless both; but, when in friendship join'd,
A mutual succour in each other find.
A youth, who hopes th' Olympic prize to gain,
All arts must try, and every toil sustain;
Th' extremes of heat and cold must often prove,
And shun the weakening joys of wine and love.
Who sings the Pythic song, first learn'd to raise
Each note distinct, and a stern master please;
But now—"Since I can write the true sublime,
Curse catch the hindmost!" cries the man of rhime.
"What! in a science own myself a fool,
Because, forsooth, I learn'd it not by rule?"
As artful criers, at a public fair,
Gather the passing crowd to buy their ware;
So wealthy poets, when they deign to write,
To all clear gains their flatterers invite.
But if the feast of luxury they give,
Bail a poor wretch, or from distress relieve,
When the black fangs of law around him bend,
How shall they know a flatterer from a friend?
If e'er you make a present, or propose
To grant a favour; while his bosom glows
With grateful sentiments of joy and praise,
Never, ah! never let him hear your lays;
Loud shall he cry, How elegant! how fine!
Turn pale with wonder at some happier line;

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Distil the civil dew from either eye,
And leap, and beat the ground in ecstasy.
As hirelings, paid for their funereal tear,
Outweep the sorrows of a friend sincere,
So the false raptures of a flatterer's art
Exceed the praises of an honest heart.
Monarchs, 'tis said, with many a flowing bowl
Search through the deep recesses of his soul,
Whom for their future friendship they design,
And put him to the torture in his wine;
So try, whene'er you write, the deep disguise,
Beneath whose flattering smiles false Renard lies.
Read to Quintilius, and at every line—
"Correct this passage, friend, and that refine."
Tell him, you tried it twice or thrice in vain—
"Haste to an anvil with your ill-form'd strain,
Or blot it out." But if you still defend
The favourite folly, rather than amend,
He'll say no more, no idle toil employ—
"Yourself unrival'd, and your works, enjoy."
An honest critic, when dull lines move slow,
Or harshly rude, will his resentment show;
Mark every fault, and with his pen efface
What is not polish'd to its highest grace;
Prune all ambitious ornaments away,
And teach you on th' obscure to pour the day;
Will mark the doubtful phrase with hand severe,
Like Aristarchus candid and sincere;
Nor say, For trifles why should I displease
The man I love? for trifles such as these
To serious mischiefs lead the man I love,
If once the flatterer's ridicule he prove.
From a mad poet, whosoe'er is wise,
As from a leprosy or jaundice, flies;
Religious madness in its zealous strain,
Nor the wild phrensy of a moon-struck brain,
Are half so dreadful: yet the boys pursue him,
And fools, unknowing of their danger, view him.
But, heedless wandering, if our man of rhime,
Bursting with verses of the true sublime,
Like fowler, earnest at his game, should fall
Into a well or ditch, and loudly call,

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"Good fellow-citizens and neighbours dear,
Help a poor bard"—not one of them will hear;
Or if, perchance, a saving rope they throw,
I will be there, and—"Sirs, you do not know
But he fell in on purpose, and, I doubt,
Will hardly thank you, if you pull him out."
Then will I tell Empedocles's story,
Who nobly fond of more than mortal glory,
Fond to be deem'd a god, in madding fit
Plung'd in cold blood in Ætna's fiery pit.
Let bards be licens'd, then, themselves to kill;
'Tis murder to preserve them 'gainst their will.
But more than once this frolic he hath play'd,
Nor, taken out, will he be wiser made,
Content to be a man; nor will his pride
Lay such a glorious love of death aside.
Nor is it plain for what more horrid crime
The gods have plagu'd him with this curse of rhime;
Whether his father's ashes he disdain'd,
Or hallow'd ground with sacrilege profan'd:
Certain he's mad, and like a baited bear,
If he hath strength enough his den to tear,
With all the horrors of a desperate Muse
The learned and unlearned he pursues.
But if he seize you, then the torture dread;
He fastens on you, till he read you dead,
And like a leech, voracious of his food,
Quits not his cruel hold till gorg'd with blood.

THE END.

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